

GREENSBORO
Connections 2025
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



*Adopted
May 2003*



May 7, 2003

Dear Citizens of Greater Greensboro:

It is my pleasure to present the *Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan* to the citizens of Greensboro. This document, and the process which led to its development, represents a significant milestone in our community. Greensboro is at a pivotal point in its history. The City's first comprehensive plan, *Connections 2025* will serve as a guide for our future growth and development over the next 20 years. During this time Greensboro will experience significant growth and change, as well as innumerable challenges and opportunities. We must diversify our economy, protect our environment, enhance our quality of life, invest in transportation and infrastructure, and promote a shared sense of direction and partnership between government, businesses and citizens. We cannot meet these challenges, or seize the opportunities that lie ahead, by maintaining the status quo and hoping for the best. We must proactively plan our future, make some changes in how we operate, and then consistently follow-through in implementing the plan.

I am convinced that *Connections 2025* represents the values, the aspirations and the best interests of all of the citizens of our diverse community. Guided by a citizens steering committee appointed by City Council to reflect a cross-section of the community, our planning process involved listening and responding to citizen concerns and ideas for the future. We began our planning process with a Vision Statement, which was created by asking the citizens what kind of place they wanted Greensboro to be in 20 years.

Following adoption of the Vision Statement by City Council, we carefully examined existing conditions, trends and the pressures for growth and change that are on the horizon. We confronted the reality that present trends are not taking us where we want to go as a community. Fragmented growth, pollution, loss of open space, traffic congestion, unbalanced investment patterns, fiscal and environmental stress, and a myriad other factors threaten to erode our quality of life and the viability of our economy, unless we take bold and decisive action. The *Connections 2025 Plan* lays out what we have called "strategic course corrections" through clearly defined goals, policies and a timetable of actions that will enable us to realize the Vision of what this great City of ours can become.

It has been my privilege to work closely over the past 2½ years with a group of dedicated folks: my fellow steering committee members, City staff, consultants, and the many citizens who have been active in providing thoughtful input to the planning process. We have grappled with some tough issues and carefully built consensus on a well-conceived plan of action. I believe we got it right. Now the real work begins as we adopt the plan and initiate the many actions necessary to carry out the plan. Our City government can't do it alone. We challenge all citizens to become active in supporting the implementation of the *Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan*.

Sincerely,

Cameron Cooke, Chair
Connections 2025
Steering Committee

AMENDING CHAPTER 30

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE GREENSBORO CODE OF ORDINANCES WITH RESPECT TO ZONING, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SECTION 30-1-10

WHEREAS, the City Council authorized the development of a comprehensive plan for the future growth, development and preservation of Greensboro; and

WHEREAS, the City Council appointed the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, held public hearings and informational meetings to hear citizens comments, and conducted work sessions on a draft Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted a Vision Statement on July 17, 2001, which reflects the values, priorities and aspirations of the citizens of Greensboro; and

WHEREAS, the Vision Statement has been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, a draft of the plan was made available to the public on December 9, 2002 for their review and comment; and

WHEREAS, four public meetings were held on January 14 -15, 2003 to present the draft plan to the public; and

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2003 a joint meeting was held with the Planning Board and Zoning Commission to review the Plan; and

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2003 the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the Plan; and

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2003 the Zoning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Plan; and

WHEREAS, public comments were accepted through February 6, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee met on March 3, 2003 to review the public comments and recommends the changes as shown on the attached addendum to the December 2002 draft of the Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee unanimously recommends approval of the Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, that Chapter 30 of the City Code of the City of Greensboro is amended as follows:

Section 1. The Plan developed and presented to City Council at its April 23, 2003, Council meeting and known as ***Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan*** is hereby adopted

and incorporated by reference into the City Code as written and amended in accordance with the instruction of City Council as set forth at that meeting.

Section 2. That Section 30-1-10, Relation to the Comprehensive Plan, is hereby amended to read as follows:

The administration, enforcement, and amendment of this Ordinance shall be accomplished with consideration of recommendations presented in the documents comprising the Comprehensive Plan. These documents include, but are not limited to, the following: comprehensive plan, thoroughfare plan, collector street plan, neighborhood plans, small area plans, community facilities plan, capital improvement program, economic development strategies, housing assistance plan, recreation plan, greenways plan, drainageway and open space plan, and watershed management plan. A copy of the adopted Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan shall be filed with the City Clerk.

Section 3. All ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 4. This ordinance shall become effective on May 6, 2003.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the City of Greensboro approaches its 200th anniversary in 2008, its citizens can take pride in their past while looking forward to a future filled with challenges and opportunities. The past several decades have been a period of transition and change for the City, characterized by changing economic conditions, growth in population and land area, and increasing concerns regarding social equity, the health of the urban core, and the nature of growth at the fringe. It can be stated with assurance that change will continue in the future, likely at an accelerated pace, but the nature of that change and how it will affect Greensboro 10, 20, and more years from now is uncertain. Thus a fundamental challenge for the future is: how do we positively engage and manage change in a manner that best promotes the well being of the City and its residents?

Connections 2025 – the first comprehensive plan in the City’s history – provides a guide for the citizens and leaders of Greensboro to respond to that challenge by setting a positive course for the future. It articulates an overall **vision** for the place citizens wish Greensboro to be in 2025, establishes **goals and policies** in support of the vision, and lays out a specific **action plan** defining the steps the City will take to achieve the desired future. At the core of the Plan is the idea of building social, physical, business, and economic **connections**: among people, organizations, and government; within Greensboro; and to the larger Piedmont Triad region, State of North Carolina, and the nation as a whole.

The Plan sets significant new directions for the City of Greensboro in a number of areas. Examples include:

- A commitment to **inclusiveness** and **social equity** for all residents of Greensboro
- An emphasis on promoting **reinvestment** in Greensboro’s urban areas and **sustainable development** at the city/county fringe
- Higher expectations for **development quality** and **resource protection**, coupled with more **flexibility** for forms of developments that meet plan objectives (compact, mixed-use, mixed housing types, etc.)
- An increased focus on **economic development** at all levels of city government, with special attention to **empowering** those who have not previously participated fully in Greensboro’s economy

One particular challenge – the need for racial reconciliation and equity – is beyond the normal scope of a Comprehensive Plan but is critical to the City’s future. To address this challenge, Section 1.4 of the Plan recommends a Community Goal and the appointment of a

Citizens Committee to study racial inequities and associated social problems in Greensboro and to identify strategies for their solution.

The Comprehensive Plan was developed through a two-year planning process that included extensive citizen involvement. Development of the plan was guided by a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee comprised of 18 members appointed by City Council to represent community interests. Public input was received through interviews with numerous stakeholders representing key civic, neighborhood, and business interests; numerous community meetings and workshops held throughout the City at key points in the planning process; email responses; and a “postcard” survey of the City’s residents. The result is a plan that reflects citizen **values and aspirations** for the future and which provides a “game plan” for translating those values and aspirations into reality.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of the following sections:

- **Chapter 1.0 (Introduction)** begins with a brief summary of Greensboro’s history and where the City is today. It then describes the purpose of and process used to develop the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Chapter 2.0 (Vision Statement)** sets forth a positive vision of what Greensboro will be in the year 2025 based upon input from citizens. It defines the role of the Vision Statement as the ultimate outcome that the Plan’s goals, policies, and actions are intended to achieve.
- **Chapter 3.0 (Plan Development)** summarizes the work done during the comprehensive planning process to move from the Vision Statement presented in Chapter 2.0 to the detailed goals, policies, and actions identified in Chapters 4.0 to 10.0.
- **Chapters 4.0 to 9.0 (Plan Elements)** are the heart of the plan, containing recommended goals and policies for the following subject areas:
 - Land Use
 - Community Character
 - Housing and Neighborhoods
 - Economic Development
 - Transportation
 - Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure

- **Chapter 10.0 (Implementation)** describes in detail how the City will implement the Comprehensive Plan.

VISION STATEMENT

In the **Vision of Greensboro in the Year 2025**, the City is known for its **exceptional livability** defined by three essential factors:

- The quality of our relationships with each other
- The quality of the place
- The quality and vitality of the economy

This exceptional livability has been achieved over time by strategically targeting actions towards four fundamental elements of the Vision:

- **Community Character:** addressing important community assets such as natural and scenic resources, neighborhoods, parks and open space, and history and heritage.
- **Sustainable Growth:** speaking to balanced investment and reinvestment across the City, including an active Center City, rejuvenation of historically underserved areas, and effective growth management at Greensboro's edges.
- **Economic Prosperity:** based upon a diverse new economy built on the community's strengths, with business and employment opportunities for all.
- **Our People, Organizations, and Government:** emphasizing strong leadership, a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, citizen involvement and volunteerism, and effective intergovernmental coordination.

PLAN ELEMENTS

Each plan element provides a brief overview of background information and issues related to its subject area¹, identifies key areas of divergence between present trends and the Vision of Greensboro in 2025, and presents goals and policies designed to move the City towards the Vision.

¹ More detailed background information is provided in the *City Data Book*, which contains statistics and facts regarding existing conditions and trends in Greensboro.

LAND USE ELEMENT

The goals and policies for land use address three major topics:

- Reinvestment/Infill
- Downtown
- Growth at the Fringe

The **Reinvestment/Infill** and **Downtown** goals and policies are designed to promote sound investment in Greensboro's urban areas, including Center City, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods. Included are strategies to promote compatible infill and reuse; target capital improvements to leverage private investment; and encourage a more active and diverse downtown.

The **Growth at the Fringe** goal and policies address the direction set by the Vision Statement to effectively use growth management tools and to coordinate with Guilford County in promoting sustainable growth at the city/county edge. Key strategies include:

- Developing a fringe area growth management framework and Land Use Plan in cooperation with Guilford County
- Using water/sewer extension and annexation policies to encourage phased development in growth areas (tiers) identified by the Plan
- Enacting incentives and guidelines to improve the pattern and quality of development occurring at the fringe

The Land Use Element also includes:

- A **Generalized Future Land Use Map** that broadly depicts the desired future pattern of land use
- A **Growth Strategy Map** that shows the conceptual locations of 1) priority reinvestment areas and corridors within the City and 2) growth tiers located at the city/county fringe, where development, annexation, and extension of public facilities are to be staged over a 20+ year period

COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

The Community Character Element addresses two major topics:

- Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources
- Man-Made Environment

The goal and policies for **Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources** focus on protecting and enhancing Greensboro's natural and scenic resources (stream corridors, tree canopy, floodplains, etc.), expanding the City's network of parks and greenways, and initiating a community-wide tree planting/re-vegetation program (Greening Greensboro). The goal and policies for the **Man-Made Environment** address the character and visual quality of Greensboro's built environment, including historic resources, scenic corridors, private developments, and public landscapes.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS ELEMENT

The goal of the **Housing and Neighborhoods** Element is to provide all Greensboro citizens with decent, affordable housing in safe, livable neighborhoods. It includes policies to implement a comprehensive neighborhood conservation and improvement program; maintain, improve, and increase the diversity of the City's housing stock; and meet affordable housing needs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The draft goal and policies for **Economic Development** support the Economic Prosperity element of the Vision Statement, which foresees a healthy, diverse economy with business and employment opportunities for all segments of the community. Increasing economic opportunities in under-served parts of Greensboro (e.g., East Greensboro) and the number of minority-owned businesses (e.g., by establishing a Minority Business Development Council) are important objectives. Key strategies are to create a more responsive, business-friendly environment in city government and to target city investments, regulatory policies, and incentives to promote desirable types of economic development.

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

The goal of the **Transportation** Element is to integrate roadway, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities in a well-balanced network that provides connections and choices for citizens to move about Greensboro and the region. To accomplish this goal, roadway improvement projects are to be strategically targeted to maintain a safe and efficient roadway network while supporting other community objectives defined in the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the Plan emphasizes development of alternative transportation modes, including comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle networks and improved transit service at the local and regional levels.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

This element addresses several types of **infrastructure systems** (water, sewer, stormwater, and solid waste) and **public facilities and services** (police, fire, and libraries) provided by the City of Greensboro. The infrastructure policies address the need to plan for increased capacity and reduced consumption of finite resources while targeting water/sewer extensions to support desired land use patterns. Policies for community facilities and services emphasize

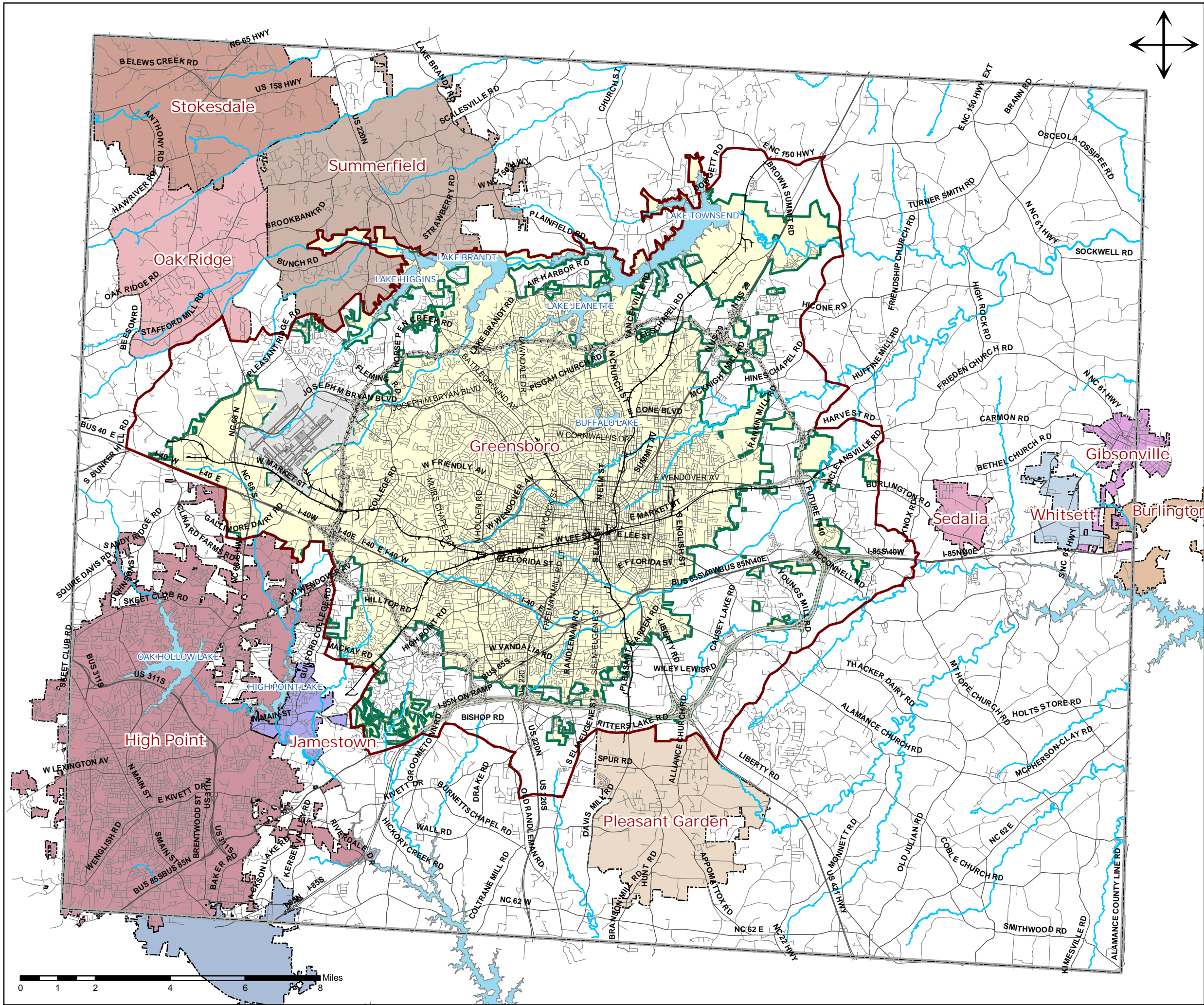
planning for the allocation of resources to ensure that high standards of service are maintained equitably throughout the City. Included are strategies to make Greensboro the **safest city in the United States**.

IMPLEMENTATION

Comprehensive plans are turned into reality by concerted, consistent attention to implementation. Chapter 10.0 lays out in detail how the Plan is to be used to make incremental progress towards achieving the Vision Statement. It contains:

- Principles for **revising zoning and development regulations** and reviewing development applications so as to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan
- Processes for **adopting, amending, monitoring, and updating** the Plan
- An **action plan** for implementing plan initiatives according to relative priority. Short-term (one year), mid-term (two to three years), and long-term (four to ten years) actions are identified.

Figure 1-2



Guilford County Cities and Towns

- Existing Urban Loop
- Future Urban Loop
- Water Sewer Boundary
- Guilford County
- Existing Runway
- Future Runway
- Airport Property
- Railroad
- River
- Lakes

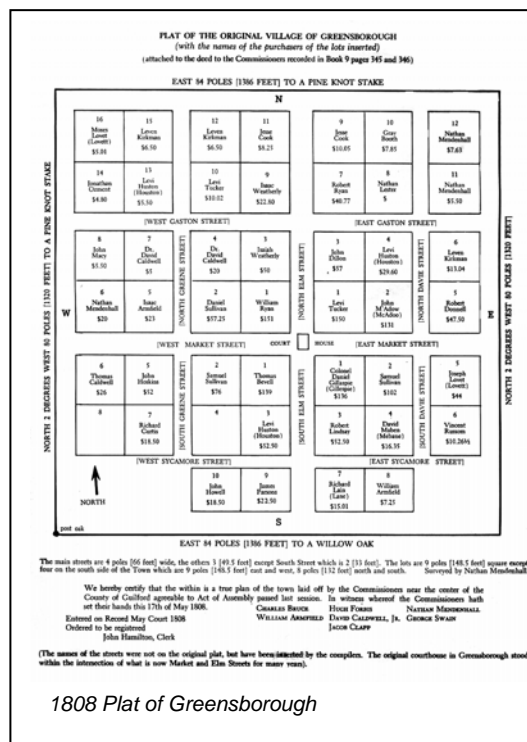
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 GREENSBORO: PAST AND PRESENT¹

The City of Greensboro is located in the central Piedmont region of North Carolina, approximately midway between Washington, DC and Atlanta, GA (see Figures 1-1 and 1-2). It is the seat of government for Guilford County, which was established by the North Carolina colonial assembly in 1771. Named in honor of Nathanael Greene, the commanding general during the 1781 Revolutionary War Battle of Guilford Courthouse, “Greensborough” was created as Guilford County’s third seat by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1808. Located at the geographic center of the County, Greensboro lacked the natural advantage of a river, but as it emerged over time as a major rail and highway hub it became known as the “Gate City.” These conditions continue to influence its development today.

Greensboro grew steadily in the first half of the nineteenth century, reaching a population of about 1,500 in 1850. Events prior to the Civil War that helped shape its future development included:

- The advent of textile manufacturing, which would become a mainstay of Greensboro’s economy.
- The founding of the Quakers’ New Garden Boarding School (now Guilford College) in 1834 and the Methodists’ Greensborough Female College (now Greensboro College) in 1838, setting the stage for Greensboro’s emergence as a center of higher learning.²



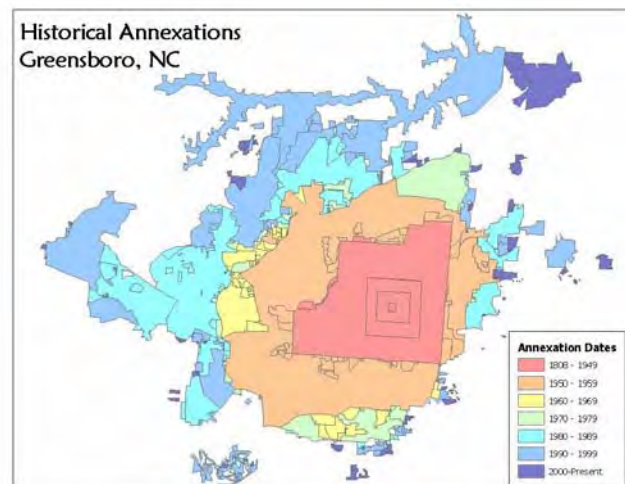
¹ Information on Greensboro’s history derived from two works by Gayle Hicks Fripp: *Images of America: Greensboro* and *Greensboro: A Chosen Center*.

² Other institutions of higher education founded in the nineteenth century included Bennett College in 1873, and UNCG and NCA&TSU in 1891.

- The establishment of the community as a stop on the North Carolina Railroad, the beginning of its development as a major transportation and distribution hub.
- The operation of the Underground Railroad, a system to help African Americans escape from slavery and an early example of racial cooperation, an important theme in Greensboro's history.

Greensboro's growth slowed during the Civil War and Reconstruction era. In 1870 a new charter made Greensboro a city, and the population grew to 2,105 in 1880. The subsequent decades were a boom period in Greensboro's history. Manufacturing of textiles, tobacco products, furniture, and metal implements increased dramatically. Sixty trains a day arrived and departed on rail lines extending in seven directions, giving Greensboro its nickname "the Gate City." Spurred by the development of streets and electric streetcars, residential subdivisions grew in an outward circle from the central business district. In 1923, when the municipal limits were extended for the third time, Greensboro's land area grew from four to nearly 18 square miles. In 1920 its population was 19,861, making Greensboro North Carolina's third largest city, a ranking it maintains today.

By 1940 Greensboro had a population of approximately 60,000 and was known as a major textile center, including Cone Mills, Burlington Mills, and Blue Bell. During World War II, the City was the site of a major training camp and overseas departure point (ORD) for the U.S. Army Air Corps. The postwar period was a time of continued growth and large-scale expansion of the City's boundaries through annexation. Shopping centers outside the traditional downtown were developed to cater to residents' increasing use of automobiles. The 1960s were marked by civil rights demonstrations, with the sit-ins started by NCA&TSU students at the F.W. Woolworth Store making national news. In 1970 the City's population was 144,076.



Historical Annexations Map

During the 1970s urban redevelopment changed the face of the downtown as aging neighborhoods and buildings were replaced and the continued development of suburban shopping centers weakened retail sales. This was a period of less vigorous expansion and population growth than the years following World War II; the City's population was 155,642 in 1980, a modest eight percent increase from 1970. The city's population growth accelerated

somewhat during the 1980s as annexation and suburban development continued. Spurred by a strong national economy, development continued at the city/county edge in the 1990s, creating concerns about loss of open space, impacts on natural resources, and the viability of older neighborhoods and commercial districts within Greensboro. Economic trends included the continuing decline of the City's industrial base and growth of services, which have displaced manufacturing as the leading employment sector.

According to the U.S. Census, Greensboro's population in 2000 was 223,891. Greensboro is located at the center of Guilford County (population 421,048) and a 12-county region with a population of approximately 1.5 million, many of whom work in and around the City. Augmented by the recent annexation of Reedy Fork Ranch in Northeast Greensboro, the City's land area has spread to just over 114 square miles. While the City's population growth has slowed over the last two decades to an average increase of approximately 2% per year, its landmass has grown approximately 4% per year. The combination of the rapid urbanization of land at the city/county fringe and the trend toward incorporation of small and primarily residential surrounding communities make it imperative that the City plan now for its future. As Greensboro approaches the 200th anniversary of its founding, this Comprehensive Plan provides a unique opportunity for the community to consider its rich heritage, take stock of where it is now, reflect on what it is becoming, and look forward to the future.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: SETTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

Greensboro has embarked on a bold mission to create its first comprehensive plan. It is doing so at a pivotal point in its history – a time of transition and accelerating change, new challenges and opportunities, and rising citizen expectations. Over the past decade Greensboro, as well as the entire Triad region, has experienced growth, contributing to certain "growing pains." While continued growth and change is a virtual certainty, considerable uncertainty exists about how the future may unfold for Greensboro and what the City may be like in 5, 10 and 20 years. One key motivation in creating a comprehensive plan is to positively influence the direction and momentum of change and to promote economic vitality to ensure that Greensboro continues to be the kind of livable, welcoming place in which citizens want to live and work. The Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for the citizens of Greensboro to retain the community's character, define its identity, improve its quality of life, and strengthen its economy.

In addition to addressing the opportunities and challenges of the future, the Comprehensive Plan also must address present shortcomings. While Greensboro will continue to be a community that cares, much work remains to be done in fully embracing diversity and ensuring equal opportunity for all. While the City has strong leaders in government,

business, and local institutions, the community has not always agreed on priorities, nor has it been unified by a shared vision or a common sense of direction. The Comprehensive Plan provides such a shared vision and direction, one that will allow citizens to face the future with confidence and optimism.

Greensboro's future and that of all its citizens will be profoundly influenced by the degree to which this mission is successful. To more fully appreciate the significance of the challenge, it is appropriate to begin by considering what a comprehensive plan is and how it will be used to achieve a better future.

Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan is:

A reflection of citizens' values, aspirations, and shared vision. Just as one would not begin a journey without first identifying a destination, the Plan must begin by defining the kind of place citizens want Greensboro to be. During the comprehensive planning process, hundreds of citizens expressed candid views about Greensboro – its present strengths and



Public Meeting

weaknesses, as well as future opportunities and threats. In listening to what citizens said, broad areas of consensus emerged concerning the kind of community they want to become. These expressed community values and aspirations provide the basis for a shared vision of Greensboro's future. Presented in Chapter 2.0, this **Vision Statement** defines citizens' expectations and directions for the future, frames the mandate for the Comprehensive Plan, and provides the benchmark to measure progress.

A guide for the management of change. If the vision for Greensboro's future is to be realized, the Comprehensive Plan must positively and deliberately influence growth and change. To accomplish this objective, the Plan must be actively applied as a framework through which decisions are made, priorities established, and actions taken that advance the City towards the vision. While Greensboro's government will take a leadership role in this effort, the Comprehensive Plan calls on citizens, civic organizations, institutions, and businesses to coordinate their efforts with a shared sense of direction and a renewed spirit of partnership.

The foundation for policies, strategies and actions. The goals and policies laid out in the plan elements (Chapters 4.0 through 9.0) are based upon a thorough evaluation of present city policies, strategies, and regulations. Areas addressed include, among others, land use, economic development, and the protection of open space and natural resources; investments in utilities, roadways, and other public services and facilities; and coordination with the State, Guilford County, and neighboring communities. While the goals and policies are presented in separate elements, many of them are closely related and they are designed to work together to achieve the future vision. Integration of these goals and policies into the day-to-day decision-making and long-range planning activities of city government will result in significant adjustments to present policies, regulations, and investment priorities.

Greensboro's "To Do" list. The Comprehensive Plan's influence on Greensboro's future will be a product of the motivating power of its shared vision, and the effectiveness of actions taken to realize the vision. The vision will not be achieved simply because citizens agree with the sentiments it expresses. Rather, it will be realized by steady progress in adhering to a well-defined "game plan" that sets priorities for effective short and long-term actions. Such a game plan is presented in the concluding chapter of the Comprehensive Plan (10.0, Implementation).

The study area for the Comprehensive Plan is defined as the land within the present Greensboro city limits and the area in unincorporated Guilford County that falls inside of the Water and Sewer Service Area Boundary adopted by City Council in 2001. The Comprehensive Plan contains a number of maps depicting the spatial occurrence within the study area of concepts described in the text. It should be noted that the maps are not regulatory in nature, but rather are intended as guides for use in future planning and decision-making.

1.3 THE PLANNING PROCESS

The City of Greensboro mobilized a significant effort to involve the entire community in the creation of the Comprehensive Plan. The work to prepare the Comprehensive Plan was carried out as a collaborative effort with specific responsibilities assigned as follows:

- A **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee**, composed of Greensboro citizens, guided policy-making throughout the planning process.

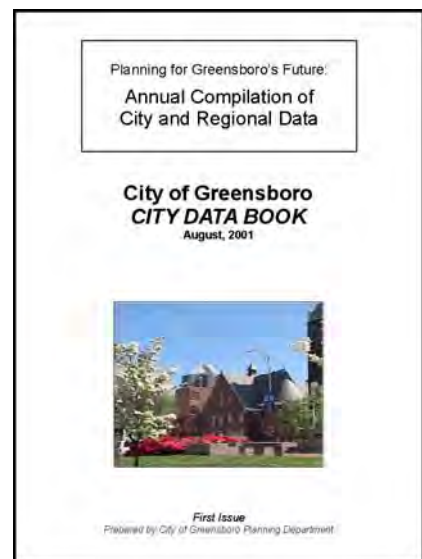


Steering Committee Meeting

- A **Technical Advisory Team**, composed of representatives of business, civic organizations, and local institutions, provided guidance on key technical challenges and strategic choices and assisted in compiling the *City Data Book*.
- A **Staff Resource and Mapping Team**, composed of senior city staff, compiled and interpreted the necessary data, studies, and mapping and participated in developing and reviewing Comprehensive Plan products.
- A **Consultant Team**, led by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, facilitated the planning process and drafted the Comprehensive Plan document with extensive input from the Steering Committee and city staff.
- The City of Greensboro **Planning Department** managed and coordinated the effort.
- Finally, the **Greensboro City Council** will adopt the Comprehensive Plan and direct the **City Administration** to implement it.

The process of preparing the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan began with articulation of a **Vision Statement**, an expression of the values, priorities, and aspirations of Greensboro's citizens (see Chapter 2.0). Concurrently with development of the Vision Statement, considerable work was done to document key conditions as they exist now in Greensboro, and how such conditions are likely to change in the future. The major components of this **Existing and Evolving Framework** included:

- **City Data Book:** Statistics and facts regarding existing conditions and trends in Greensboro.
- **Community Structure:** The present pattern of development, neighborhoods, support facilities, and environmental resources in the City, and their susceptibility to change.
- **Factors for Change:** Conditions or influences that will affect the likely capacity, direction, rate, and location of future change (e.g., the Urban Loop).
- **Regulatory/Jurisdictional Context:** Policy, legal, and other governmental influences or limits on future growth and change.
- **Trend Analysis:** A depiction of what Greensboro may be like in 20 years, if present development trends, market forces, public policies, and similar influences were to continue.



This phase of the planning process culminated in a work session (referred to as the “Comprehensive Plan Charette”) conducted in September 2001 with city staff, consultants, the Technical Advisory Team, and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee as participants. The purpose of the charette was to brainstorm the “big picture” of the planning challenge Greensboro faces (i.e., the type and magnitude of the “course corrections” that are needed if the Vision Statement is to be realized), based on a synthesis of the existing conditions and trends information. The charette results were used to frame the scope of the challenge and the issues addressed in the next phase of work, **Policy and Concept Development**.

Over the course of many meetings, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee worked with the consultants to explore available choices in development concepts, policies, and actions that may be taken to redirect conditions and trends to more effectively realize the Greensboro described in the Vision Statement. This work culminated in the selection of a draft set of Goals and Policies, accompanied by a Preliminary Concept Plan for the future growth of the City. A series of public meetings to present and receive comments on the Draft Goals, Policies, and Concept Plan were held in June of 2002.

Following the public meetings, the Draft Goals, Policies, and Concept Plan were refined and detailed in this full Comprehensive Plan document. In the final step of the process, **Plan Review and Adoption**, the Plan will be circulated for public review, leading to adoption by City Council.

1.4 FUTURE CHALLENGES: ACHIEVING RECONCILIATION AND EQUITY

Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan has been structured to focus attention and direct City policy and actions to address a broad array of challenges associated with its future development – from managing growth and promoting reinvestment to protecting the environment and improving quality of life. These are issues over which the City can exert considerable influence and for which we can expect significant results over the Plan's 20-year horizon. There is however, a particular challenge that lies beyond the scope of a comprehensive plan and beyond the purview of local government to mandate results or solutions. This issue pertains to the wide gap between the "haves and have-nots" in Greensboro, a gap which exists largely along racial lines.

The lunch counter sit-ins of the 1960s vividly brought attention to the City's racial divisions. Although progress can be noted, our values and our vision for racial reconciliation and equity are not yet matched by reality. The reality is that Greensboro remains a city largely divided along racial lines. African-Americans and other minorities are vastly under-

represented among business owners and community leaders and over-represented among the poor, under-employed, under-educated and incarcerated. These facts are not acceptable and must become a matter of conscience and commitment to fundamental change. If Greensboro is to achieve its Vision of a better future, it must be a better future enjoyed by everyone. No one must be left out.

A number of the policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan are designed to promote inclusiveness and opportunity for African-Americans and other minorities. Economic development policies to encourage minority small business development and investment in historically under-served areas such as East Greensboro are examples. However, broader action that involves the entire Greensboro community will be necessary to address the core issue of racial disparity.

While city government cannot mandate cures for deep-seated racial attitudes, it can state the nature of the problem and suggest several broad fronts of community action that can begin to eliminate these deep-rooted problems. Towards this end, the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee encourages local government, institutions and citizens to make a fundamental commitment to reconciling the racial divisions and inequities in our community in accordance with the following goal:

Community Goal: Achieve racial reconciliation and equity, and empower minorities and the under-privileged to become full and equal participants in the economic and civic life of the community.

Potential areas of focus include, but are not limited to:

- ***Educational Achievement:*** Encourage and support the efforts of local schools, colleges and institutions to promote academic success and achievement for minority and under-privileged students, including: a reduction in the academic achievement gap; retraining for the underemployed; preschool opportunities for all; and a reduction in the minority dropout rate.
- ***Social Problems:*** Develop and apply effective approaches to significantly reduce social problems disproportionately affecting African-Americans and other minorities, including unemployment, poverty, substance abuse, and crime.



Photo courtesy of Guilford County Schools

- ***Communications and Participation:*** Improve communications among all segments of the Greensboro community, and promote increased participation and inclusiveness by minority cultures in community activities.

To begin this effort, the Steering Committee proposes that a citizens committee be appointed to study racial inequities and associated social problems in Greensboro and to identify strategies for their elimination.

2.0 VISION STATEMENT

2.1 THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE VISION

This chapter presents the Vision Statement developed in the first phase of the planning process to define the kind of place citizens want Greensboro to be 20 or more years in the future. In considering this Vision Statement, it is important to understand its perspective, context, and role in the Comprehensive Plan. The Vision Statement expresses citizens' **aspirations for the future of Greensboro**. Because it describes the future as citizens choose for it to exist, it is written from the perspective of someone in 2025 observing the character of Greensboro and reflecting on the past 20 years of progress – progress guided by the Goals, Policies, and Action Plan set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.



The Vision Statement should be clearly distinguished from the topical elements (Land Use, Community Character, etc.) of the Comprehensive Plan. The Vision Statement expresses our values and motivations – what we intend to achieve by 2025 – while the elements (together with the concluding Implementation chapter) set out in detail how we intend to achieve the vision. It is essential to define the “what” before the “how,” just as the “destination” must be defined before the “route” can be mapped out. As we read the Vision Statement and imagine the place citizens wish the City to be in 2025, it is natural to make comparisons with Greensboro as it is now, or as it was in the past. We will distinguish ways in which Greensboro has changed a great deal from ways in which it seems hardly changed at all. Because the Comprehensive Plan will be used to influence change, consider how the Vision Statement embraces change. In so doing, it balances **vigilance** in protecting from unwanted change that which citizens cherish about Greensboro with an **activism** in promoting the desired types of change that will accelerate forward progress.

2.2 CITIZEN INPUT

The level of citizen involvement in providing the input needed to craft the Vision Statement was considerable. Some 140 community stakeholders, representing key civic and business organizations, were interviewed early in the planning process. Over 420 citizens participated in seven community forums to discuss issues facing the City and approximately 1,800 citizens returned "postcard" survey forms, indicating preferences for Greensboro's future. From this input the following key areas of community consensus emerged as key themes to be articulated in the Vision Statement:



Community Forum

- ***Quality of Life and Livability:*** to maintain quality housing, safe neighborhoods, and good services and facilities, and to promote civic-mindedness and volunteer tradition.
- ***Community Character:*** to enhance the beauty of Greensboro by protecting tree cover, parks, scenic open spaces, natural resources, and historic heritage; and by setting standards for quality.
- ***Infrastructure Capacity:*** to ensure the ability to meet future needs for water, wastewater treatment, storm drainage, and solid waste management.
- ***Economic Development:*** to diversify the economy, attract good jobs, retain youth, capitalize on the City's strategic location, and promote healthy investment and business development, particularly in underserved areas such as East Greensboro.
- ***Balance and Equity:*** to correct inequities, promote participation by all races and cultures, and make decisions that reflect the best interests of all citizens of Greensboro.
- ***Management of Growth:*** to guide and set high standards for sustainable development patterns, to protect community character and resources, and to promote sound investment throughout Greensboro.

- ***Transportation:*** to maintain the convenience of the road system, avoid congestion, and promote alternatives to reliance on the automobile and improve transit opportunities.
- ***Public Education:*** to invest in our children's future by supporting Guilford County public schools in providing the best possible quality of education.
- ***Higher Education:*** to work in partnership with colleges and universities to promote sound economic development and enrich community life.
- ***Center City:*** to maintain a vibrant, healthy urban center that is the heart of Greensboro's civic life, a source of community pride, a focus of citizens' identity, and a reflection of our historic character.

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee with the assistance of the Consultant Team drafted the Vision Statement based upon the public input. The Vision Statement was adopted by City Council on July 17, 2001.

2.3 VISION STATEMENT

Our Vision of Greensboro and its environs in the Year 2025 is one in which the City is recognized throughout the nation as an exceptional place in which to live, work, play and nurture future generations. It is this exceptional livability which defines our identity, contributes to our civic pride, and offers opportunities for all to participate fully in community life. We have achieved our vision by retaining and building on our heritage, embracing positive growth and change, and by balancing our priorities for:



The Blandwood Mansion

- ***The quality of our relationships with each other.*** We are a caring and welcoming community that values equity for all races and cultures and our shared identity as proud citizens of Greensboro.

- ***The quality of the place.*** We are a community which cherishes and protects its historic heritage and scenic natural resources and which sets high standards for the quality and protection of the man-made and natural environment, respectively.
- ***The quality and vitality of the economy.*** As a community we encourage job creation and welcome innovation and investment to create opportunities for all to contribute to and benefit from economic advancement.



This exceptional livability has been achieved by facing up to our challenges, acknowledging and addressing our shortcomings, and by consistent steady progress in realizing our shared vision for the future. Our success is the result of deliberate, purposeful, and unified actions by citizens, government, businesses, and institutions, which have accepted responsibility to work in partnership to realize our collective vision of what Greensboro can and should be. These actions have been strategically targeted towards four fundamental elements of the vision:

- Community Character
- Sustainable Growth
- Economic Prosperity
- Our People, Organizations, and Government

Community Character

- We have kept the "Green" in Greensboro; by valuing and protecting our tree canopy, forests, streams, rural vistas, air and water quality, and other irreplaceable **natural and scenic resources**.
- Our **safe, well-maintained, livable neighborhoods** meet the basic needs of residents for a clean environment; decent, affordable housing; and convenient access to quality services such as shopping, parks, schools, and community facilities.
- Our proactive approach to crime prevention includes diverse initiatives such as those for community/police partnerships and economic empowerment, leading to a well-deserved reputation as the **safest city** in America.

- We respect our **history and heritage** by preserving historic sites, buildings, and districts; by honoring landmark events, and by interpreting Greensboro's history for present and future generations.
- Greensboro's active **cultural life** – our museums, the arts, cultural festivals, and other events – is a source of community pride and shared experience for our diverse population.
- The **visual character** and image of the City has been enhanced through careful attention to our major roadway and scenic corridors, activity centers, gateways, landmarks, greenways, and other features that act as community “form-givers.”
- A network of accessible **parks and open spaces** provides high quality recreational and leisure opportunities for residents.
- Our **standards for development quality** reflect the special character we choose to maintain.



Sustainable Growth

Throughout Greensboro we see...

- **Balanced investment** and reinvestment across the City, creating quality urban, suburban, and rural places that offer a choice of setting and lifestyle.
- **Compact development patterns** that incorporate mixed land uses and densities and which encourage transit, biking, and walking as convenient alternatives to automobile use.
- **Recycled vacant sites and buildings** that have been encouraged by supportive development policies.



- A **functional, well integrated transportation system** that provides connections and choices for citizens to move about Greensboro and the Triad, including convenient bus and light rail linkages.
- **Infrastructure systems** such as sewer, water, solid waste management, and other critical resources provided to meet long-term needs, positively influence development patterns, promote conservation, and place no undue burdens on particular parts of the City.

At **Greensboro's edges** we see...

- Effective use of growth management tools to promote **wise, balanced, and equitable growth** while protecting rural lands from premature development and inefficient sprawl.
- Coordination of **development and infrastructure investment policies** by the City, Guilford County, area municipalities, and other regional entities.



At **Greensboro's center** we see...

- A **vibrant Center City**, active day and night, that serves as the heart of our economic, cultural, and civic life and reflects our historic heritage.
- **Reclaimed buildings and revitalized neighborhoods and commercial areas.**
- A **balanced mix of uses and activities**, including employment, close-in urban housing, pedestrian-oriented shopping, and lively districts and activity centers for entertainment, the arts, education, sports, and recreation.



In **other areas** of the city where needs had not been met we see...

- **Rejuvenated areas** that have attracted new investment and are vital and prosperous parts of our community, and which address past inequities and deficiencies. A more **balanced approach** to capital investment in these historically underserved parts of our community.
- **Actions and resources** committed to the task.
- **Citizens energized and empowered** as full participants in the life of the community.



Southside Neighborhood



Economic Prosperity

- The City's economic growth has produced business and employment **opportunities for all**, leading to the empowerment of those who have not previously participated fully in the economic life of the community and to the retention of our talented youth.
- Through effective incentives and investment policies, we have achieved a more **balanced development pattern** serving all neighborhoods and quadrants of the City, particularly in areas such as East Greensboro, which had been underserved by certain desired types of development.
- Greensboro has succeeded in transitioning to a **diverse new economy** by promoting "home-grown" businesses and entrepreneurs and by welcoming into the community some of the world's leading corporations and institutions.
- We have succeeded in economic development by **building on our strengths**: our highly trained and motivated **workforce**, our institutions of **higher learning**, our **strategic** transportation and communications location, and our reputation for **livability**.

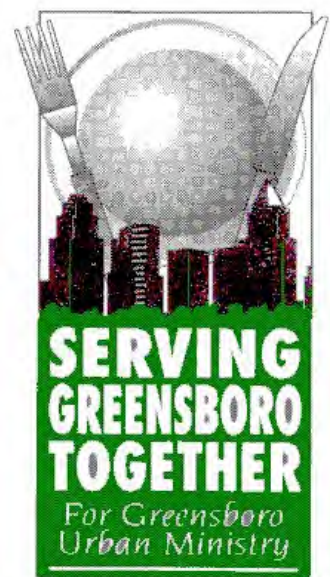


- In choosing to promote employment and investment, we carefully **balance** the value of **economic development**, and its benefits to all Greensboro citizens, with the **protection of natural resources** and community character.
- We are proud of our reputation as a **business-friendly community**, where clear standards, coupled with user-friendly regulatory policies and wise public investments in transportation and infrastructure, attract long-term private investment.
- Major investments by businesses have strengthened the local **tax base**, allowing the City to maintain moderate tax rates.
- We have carefully monitored, identified and promoted **sites and districts** for appropriate types of economic development, including but not limited to, urban area infill and redevelopment, technology and office parks, and industrial development adjacent to major transportation facilities.



Our People, Organizations, and Government

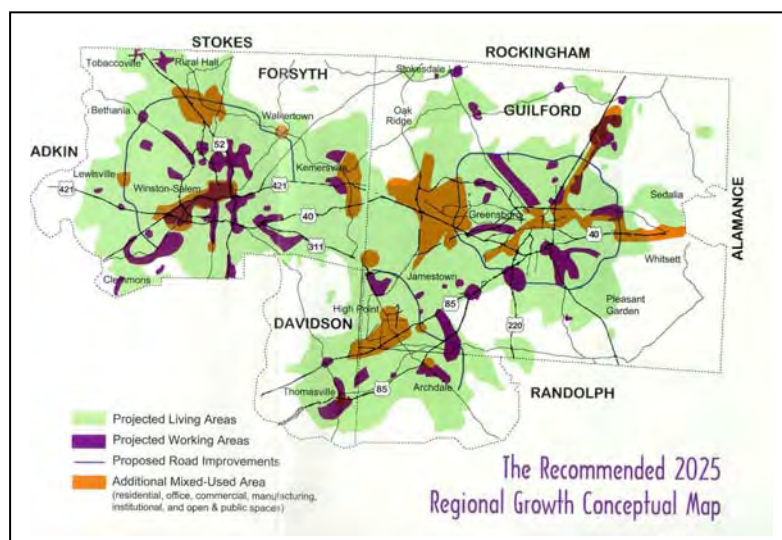
- Greensboro is a **friendly, welcoming community** that invites newcomers to join us and participate fully in the life and prosperity of the community.
- Greensboro celebrates its **racial and cultural diversity** and creates opportunities for all citizens through a **commitment to inclusiveness**.
- Greensboro retains its strong heritage of **citizen involvement, volunteerism, and caring for others**. Major foundations, faith-based groups, and other community organizations are unified by the common vision and strategic direction provided by the Comprehensive Plan.
- Greensboro retains its **strong heritage for healthcare and health facilities** and will continue to **encourage and promote quality and affordable healthcare** for all its citizens.



- Greensboro has responded to the challenge to foster a new generation of **community leaders**, who are committed to principles of empowerment, equity, innovation, collaboration, and civic pride.
- Greensboro has recognized that its most valuable resources are its children, by encouraging and promoting excellence in the **Guilford County public school system** and continuing citizen volunteer support.
- The City's **institutions of higher education** are active resources and partners in initiatives to expand economic opportunities, stimulate innovation, and promote lifelong learning.
- **City government** retains its reputation for providing a high level of service and has made great strides in exercising leadership, responding to the concerns of citizens, and challenging them to become involved in community affairs.
- The City has taken a leadership role in monitoring regional conditions and in promoting greater **intergovernmental coordination** with the State of North Carolina, Guilford County, neighboring communities, and other regional entities.



Photo courtesy of Guilford County Schools



3.0 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A necessary step in achieving the Vision Statement is to understand where the City of Greensboro has been, where it is now, and where it is likely headed if present trends continue. A considerable amount of information was compiled and analyzed concurrently with development of the Vision Statement to characterize Greensboro's **Existing and Evolving Framework** (see Section 1.3, The Planning Process). Statistics and facts regarding existing conditions and trends in Greensboro are documented in the *City Data Book*. In addition to this factual base of information, additional work was done to conceptualize in broader terms where the City is now and what it is becoming, thus setting the stage for identifying the “course corrections” needed to influence change in the direction of the Vision.

This chapter summarizes the work that was done as a “bridge” between the Vision Statement (Chapter 2.0) and the detailed policies and actions contained in the plan elements (Chapters 4.0 through 9.0) and the implementation program (Chapter 10.0). Section 3.1 characterizes **current trends** in Greensboro in terms of the following:

- **Community Structure – Area Types:** Areas within the City that are distinguished by their broad development patterns and the amount of change they are expected to experience in the future.
- **Factors for Change:** Conditions or influences that will affect the likely capacity, direction, rate, and location of change (e.g., construction of the Urban Loop).
- **Trend Growth Scenario:** A conceptual depiction of future conditions and development patterns that are likely to occur in the City if present trends and policies continue.

Section 3.2 compares **trend growth** to the elements of the **Vision Statement** as a basis for identifying needed changes in policy and strategy. It concludes by summarizing the major **areas of divergence** between trend

and vision, which were used to organize the Draft Goals and Policies formulated in the next phase of work (Policy and Concept Development).

AREA	2000	2020	INCREASE	
			POP.	% *
PRESENT CITY LIMITS	223,891	278,293	54,402	24%
URBAN FRINGE	43,843	62,381	18,538	42%
TOTAL	267,734	340,674	72,940	27%
*1.4 AVERAGE ANNUAL				

Projected trend growth population increase

The information presented in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 largely reflects work accomplished during the “Comprehensive Plan Charette” conducted in September 2001. Section 3.3 describes the Draft Concept map that was prepared concurrently with the Draft Goals and Policies for review and comment by the public in the summer of 2002 prior to preparation of the full Comprehensive Plan.

3.1 CURRENT TRENDS

3.1.1 COMMUNITY STRUCTURE – AREA TYPES

In a community such as Greensboro, which is characterized by well-developed patterns of land use, transportation and infrastructure, land use change will occur incrementally in response to fairly predictable influences. By identifying areas within the City where certain types of change are being experienced or are anticipated, attention can be directed to how and where land use policy may be adjusted to positively influence such change. Figure 3-1 depicts **Community Structure** by categorizing the City into four **Area Types** that are expected to experience varying levels and types of change:

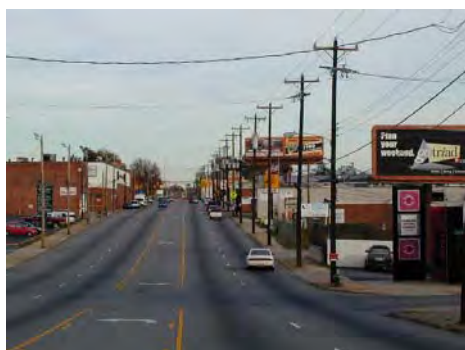
- Developed Areas
- Developed and Changing Areas
- Developing Areas
- Undeveloped Areas

Developed Areas

Developed Areas comprise the largest portion of the City's land area, including much of the suburban portion of Greensboro: its large expanses of maturing, single-family neighborhoods and newer commercial areas serving the residential population. Such areas are expected to remain relatively stable through the plan horizon, with limited pressure for land use change or need for redevelopment or revitalization. Key challenges in these established areas are to



maintain stability by avoiding adverse influences and to encourage appropriate forms of complementary infill development as opportunities arise.



Developed and Changing Areas

Developed and Changing Areas comprise much of the land area within the more urban sections of Greensboro, such as Downtown, older neighborhoods, highway corridors, and industrial areas. Changing land use patterns or pressures to change are already in evidence in these areas and will continue well into the future. Building types and land uses established decades ago gradually become obsolete, due in part to market and economic changes. Examples of these changes include the current trend away from manufacturing and heavy industrial to services and shifts in retail uses away from older highway strips to larger, more competitive suburban centers. Likewise, because of the age of commercial and residential structures, physical deterioration often accompanies land use change, resulting in buildings and sites that are poorly suited to more modern uses and are costly or impractical to retrofit. Such areas are often characterized by smaller, fragmented site configurations that are difficult to redevelop and which may not meet current zoning requirements. These factors combine to create powerful disincentives for new investment and redevelopment. Development in such areas is often more costly, more risky, and more constrained by regulatory compliance and fees when compared with opportunities in outlying "greenfield" areas.

Such areas also represent tremendous opportunities for the introduction of more compact, mixed-use development, for higher density, mixed-income housing located near employment and transit, and for the adaptive reuse of the City's inventory of historic structures. The focus of the Comprehensive Plan is to encourage positive forms of investment by "leveling the playing field" with more suburban locations. As described in more detail in the policies for Reinvestment/Infill in Section 4.5.1 of the Land Use Element, this will be done through a combination of incentives, removal of regulatory constraints, and direct city actions to encourage private investment.

Developing Areas

Developing Areas are those sections of the City and its fringe within the water/sewer boundary that are currently experiencing substantial growth pressures, stimulated in part by new roads and highway improvements. Most of these areas will be built out over the plan horizon. Key challenges in such areas are to ensure rational, compatible land use patterns, upgrade development standards, and plan for the introduction of public facilities, parks, greenways, and other community "form-givers."





Undeveloped Areas

Undeveloped Areas are those areas within the City's water and sewer boundary where substantial development pressure is not yet occurring or imminent. Such areas are mostly rural and agricultural in character, with fragmented large lot and estate development and few public services or facilities. Key challenges in these areas are to avoid premature or inefficient patterns such as sprawl, or leapfrog development.

Attracted by relatively inexpensive land combined with accommodating policies for water/sewer extensions and resulting annexations, inefficient patterns are likely to proliferate in these areas. Consequences include an accelerating rate of loss of farmland, public facility and service delivery costs which exceed tax revenues generated, and an inefficient land use pattern that may preclude longer-range, more economically viable development options.

3.1.2 FACTORS FOR CHANGE

Depicted graphically in Figure 3-2, **Factors for Change** are conditions that can be expected to influence where and when development pressures will occur. As such, they indicate where attention should be focused to manage future growth and change. These factors fall generally into several categories, as follows:

- Transportation Enhancements
- Major Activity Centers
- Growth “Barriers”
- Intangible and External Factors

Transportation Enhancements

Transportation Enhancements improve accessibility to certain locations, often leading to greater marketability and development pressure for higher economic uses. These development pressures can be expected at many of the major interchanges along the Urban Loop, as well as in the vicinity of the future I-73 corridor near the airport. Development pressures can also be expected along the US 29 corridor, the West Market Street corridor west to Kernersville, the Wendover/Guilford



Urban Loop under construction

College Road area, and the High Point Road corridor.



Piedmont Triad International Airport



Downtown

Major Activity Centers

Major Activity Centers influence growth through their ability to attract investment to regional centers of activity. Regional airports nationwide that have both airline passenger and cargo service typically attract major industrial and corporate office development, along with supporting services in surrounding areas. In Greensboro the large tracts of developable land surrounding the Piedmont Triad International Airport, coupled with the Urban Loop to the east and I-73 to the west, will continue to fuel such growth and will make this area one of the region's largest centers of employment. Although the airport area will begin to rival Downtown Greensboro as an employment center, Downtown will continue to attract investment as it becomes more diversified with entertainment, center city housing, and other complements to its traditional function as the City's business hub. Landmark private developments, such as Reedy Fork, will also exert considerable influence on

the City's growth dynamics. Not only will this development likely absorb a significant amount of the growth pressure at the fringe, but future developments may be influenced to emulate the high standard it has set for development quality.

Growth Barriers

Growth Barriers are factors that tend to limit or constrain growth. These factors among others include environmental barriers such as the watershed critical area in the vicinity of the northern lakes, which are susceptible to water quality degradation and which are difficult to serve with sewer system extensions. Other "barrier" conditions include rural settlements such as McLeansville and Colfax, which may resist or be incompatible with certain types of more intensive urban or industrial development. The City of High Point and smaller incorporated towns such as Jamestown, Summerfield, and Oak Ridge are also barriers to the future expansion of the City. While the water/sewer boundary does represent a defined growth limit based on the City's infrastructure capacity, the amount of growth it can absorb is sufficient to sustain the City's projected population growth for several decades.

Intangible and External Factors

Intangible and External Factors that will influence growth patterns are many and complex. A good example is demographic change, such as the aging of the baby-boom generation which will impact the housing and consumer market. Likewise, the influence of information technology on education, industry, and employment patterns is readily apparent. More tangible and direct in their effects on the City's growth are the growth dynamics of neighboring Winston-Salem, Kernersville, High Point and Burlington, as the region's larger communities begin to merge into a more integrated urban metropolitan pattern.

3.1.3 TREND GROWTH SCENARIO

Figure 3-3, Trend Growth Scenario, conceptually depicts future conditions and development patterns that are likely to occur, given a continuation of present trends and policies. It is a composite diagram of major trends identified by participants in the Comprehensive Plan Charette conducted in September 2001. At the charette, Greensboro's overall development pattern was conceptualized as consisting of three basic components:

- Urban Greensboro
- Suburban Greensboro
- Fringe Growth Areas

Issues and challenges vary considerably for these three components.

Urban Greensboro

Urban Greensboro consists of the urbanized center of the City, including the Downtown and the surrounding older highway corridors and neighborhoods, including much of East Greensboro. This area encompasses much of the City's history and its urban grid pattern that predate the period of post-war growth of the 1950s and after. Challenges in this section of the City include:

- Avoiding or reversing decline, disinvestment, and obsolescence in some of Greensboro's older neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas
- Encouraging employment and shopping areas in the underserved east side of the urban area

While Urban Greensboro contains significant impediments to reinvestment, such as "brownfield" sites, it also contains significant opportunities for compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development that could strengthen and diversify the Downtown and adjoining older neighborhoods and highway corridors.

Suburban Greensboro

Suburban Greensboro covers the large swath of the City, comprised primarily of "built-out" lower density residential neighborhoods and newer commercial developments, which almost entirely surrounds Urban Greensboro. Market forces over the short term will likely produce little dramatic change in this land use pattern through the plan horizon. Although the present suburban pattern is likely to remain stable and economically viable for some time, problems such as mounting traffic congestion and loss of open space and environmental resources can be directly attributed to conventional suburban development practices, such as highway commercial strips and low density subdivisions isolated from employment or commercial centers.

Fringe Growth Areas

Fringe Growth Areas are areas beyond the City's presently developed edges where new development is already occurring, or where growth pressures may be expected to occur in the future. Three types of fringe growth areas are depicted. **Current Fringe Growth Areas** are already "committed" to growth by virtue of existing and committed developments, annexations, and programmed roads and infrastructure extensions. These areas include the vicinity of I-85/Grandover Parkway and along the planned northern section of the Urban Loop in the area of United Health Care, North Elm Street, and Lake Jeanette. **Emerging Fringe Growth Areas** comprise a sizeable land area to the east, extending from just west of US Highway 29 to just west of US Highway 421. In this area voluntary annexation activity has begun with sizable developments such as Reedy Fork, and will accelerate with the staged completion of the Urban Loop. The third category, **Anticipated Growth Areas**, consists of locations where development pressures may be expected but where it may not be feasible for the City to provide services. The area above the City's northern lakes will likely see growth pressure, but is difficult and very expensive to provide with sewer service. The area in the vicinity of Colfax, west of the airport, will see pressure due to the airport expansion, but some major infrastructure will need to be installed. The area south of the airport is and will continue to be subject to growth pressure but will be served by the City of High Point.

As part of the assessment of trend growth, projections of population growth through the year 2020 were prepared and compared to the estimated capacity of the area within the water/sewer service boundary to accommodate the associated demand in new residential units. These estimates revealed that the City has considerable "growing room" – mostly in fringe growth areas – to accommodate projected demand. Stated in broad terms, it is estimated that sufficient capacity exists to accommodate approximately 40 to 50 years of residential growth at current rates of increase.¹

¹ Documentation of the methodology used to develop the growth/capacity estimates is provided in *Working Paper: Results of 9/4-6/01 Comprehensive Plan Charette*, Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, November 2001.

3.2 COMPARISON OF VISION TO TREND

By comparing the Vision Statement to what the City is actually becoming as represented in the Trend Growth Scenario, attention is focused on needed changes in policy and strategy. During the Comprehensive Plan Charette, participants identified key areas of divergence between components of the Vision Statement and trend growth. These differences are noted in Table 3-1.

The areas of divergence between vision and trend were further synthesized and categorized into the following five key **areas of concern** related to the Vision Statement:

- **Urban Core**, including Reinvestment/Infill, Downtown, and Housing and Neighborhoods
- **Growth at the Fringe**
- **Economic Development**
- **Natural and Man-Made Environment**, including Open Space, Parks, and Natural Resources and the Man-Made (Built) Environment
- **Supporting Infrastructure and Services**, including Transportation and Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure

These areas of concern were used to organize the Draft Goals and Policies developed by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Draft Goals and Policies, in turn, were developed following public review and comment into the Comprehensive Plan Elements presented in Chapters 4.0 through 9.0.

Table 3-1. Comparison of Vision Statement to Trend Growth

Vision Statement Component	Trend
Community Character	
Natural and Scenic Resources	Development will result in continued fragmentation and loss of resources such as tree canopy.
Livable Neighborhoods	Factors such as declining commercial corridors and the need for basic infrastructure in certain areas will affect neighborhood viability.
Visual Character	Visual character will erode if current development practices continue.
Parks and Open Spaces	Development will result in continued fragmentation and loss of open spaces.
Sustainable Growth	
Balanced Investment	Development at the city/county fringe could bypass East Greensboro and other areas in need of investment.
Compact Development Patterns	Conventional, land-consumptive subdivisions are the predominant development pattern; compact development may not occur without substantial incentives.
Recycled Vacant Sites and Buildings	The current bias towards “greenfield” development will continue to limit investment in redevelopment.
Transportation System	Future conditions will include increased auto dependency and congestion, lack of a fully connected road network, pedestrian “unfriendly” development, and lack of coordination between transit and land uses.
Infrastructure Systems (water, sewer, etc.)	Inefficient provision of facilities and services will result from serving dispersed growth.
Greensboro’s Edges	Conditions at the city/county edge will be characterized by fragmented development, lack of “form givers,” and impacts on fiscal health and community character.
Economic Prosperity	
Balanced Development	Development at the city/county fringe could bypass East Greensboro and other areas in need of investment.
Diverse Economy	The continued shift to a service-based economy with lower paying job opportunities will continue.
Strong Tax Base	Increased cost to serve development at the fringe will outstrip growth in tax base.
Our People, Organizations, and Government	
Intergovernmental Coordination	Lack of effective coordination on regional growth issues will continue.

3.3 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT

Concurrent with the preparation of Draft Goals and Policies, a Preliminary (Draft) Concept Map (Figure 3-4) was prepared to depict the geographic application of policies, particularly those related to future land use. This conceptual diagram indicates basic principles for the City's structure and functions, and the varied challenges of growth and change. It is included herein as a record of the plan development process and its content is superseded by the Generalized Future Land Use Map and other maps contained in the plan elements. Key elements of the city-wide concept are as follows.

Major Community Functions

Three broad categories of land use and function depict where most residents will continue to work, shop and reside:

- **Employment**, including major centers of office and industrial uses
- **Commercial**, including the City's several highway commercial corridors and regional centers such as Wendover/I-40
- **Residential**, comprising the bulk of the City's land area in residential use

Reinvestment Areas

Superimposed over the three basic community functions, **Reinvestment Areas** include Downtown, older neighborhoods, highway corridors, and industrial areas, as well as portions of East Greensboro. All such areas are suitable for the application of various incentives to promote reinvestment and revitalization, and to encourage new forms of mixed-use and other compact development types.



Growth Tiers

Land within the water/sewer boundary has a development capacity well beyond that which the City's projected growth could reasonably absorb for development over the next several decades. Without a rational, defined policy for where and how the City should expand, such expansion will continue to occur in random, leapfrog fashion leading to a highly fragmented City-County edge. This in turn will create demands for extension of services and facilities that will stretch the City's fiscal capacity. **Growth Tiers** are applied between the present City limits and the water/sewer boundary to properly stage annexation, development, and the extension of City infrastructure and public services. Three such growth tiers are conceptually identified:

- **Tier One (Current Targeted Growth)** is where growth can best be accommodated over the next ten years. Within these areas growth pressures are already emerging, infrastructure extensions are already being made or planned, and City costs to make such extension are lowest.
- **Tier Two (Intermediate Growth)** includes areas where substantial growth pressures are not yet in evidence, and where infrastructure costs are greater than in Tier One. It is expected that such areas will be needed to meet the City's growth needs beyond the next ten years. Until such time that Tier One approaches build-out, water and sewer extensions and annexations in Tier Two shall generally be discouraged.
- **Tier Three (Long Term Growth)** includes areas within the water/sewer boundary where costs to extend infrastructure and city services are highest and where development is less desirable or advantageous until development has consolidated within Tiers One and Two. It is expected that such areas will be needed to meet the City's growth needs beyond the next 20 years. Until such time that Tier Two approaches build-out, water and sewer extensions and annexations in Tier Three shall be discouraged.

Regardless of the above policies, **the City may choose to consider unique development opportunities in Tiers Two and Three** that are fiscally sound, promote long-term development, and otherwise reflect the broad public interest.

Activity Centers

By their nature, activity centers comprise a concentration of mixed commercial, industrial or institutional services, employment and higher density housing, as a preferred alternative to the consequences of fragmenting such activities along highway corridors or as stand-alone "big boxes." The Preliminary Concept map depicts a number of existing activity centers, most of which are community-serving retail centers, located at or near major highway crossroads or interchanges. At these existing centers, as well as future activity centers, a greater diversification and intensification of uses, and more compact, pedestrian friendly forms of development are to be encouraged.

Figure 3-1
Plan Section 3.1.1

Area Types

Area Types with Acreages

- Undeveloped
- Developing
- Developed*
- Developed and Changing**

*Not likely to see change.
**May see change.

- Future Urban Loop
- Water Sewer Boundary
- Railroad
- Existing Runways
- Streams
- Lakes
- Greensboro City Limits

Note:
1) Numbers represent acreage of Area Types.
2) The 49,059 acres includes all Developed (yellow) areas on the map.

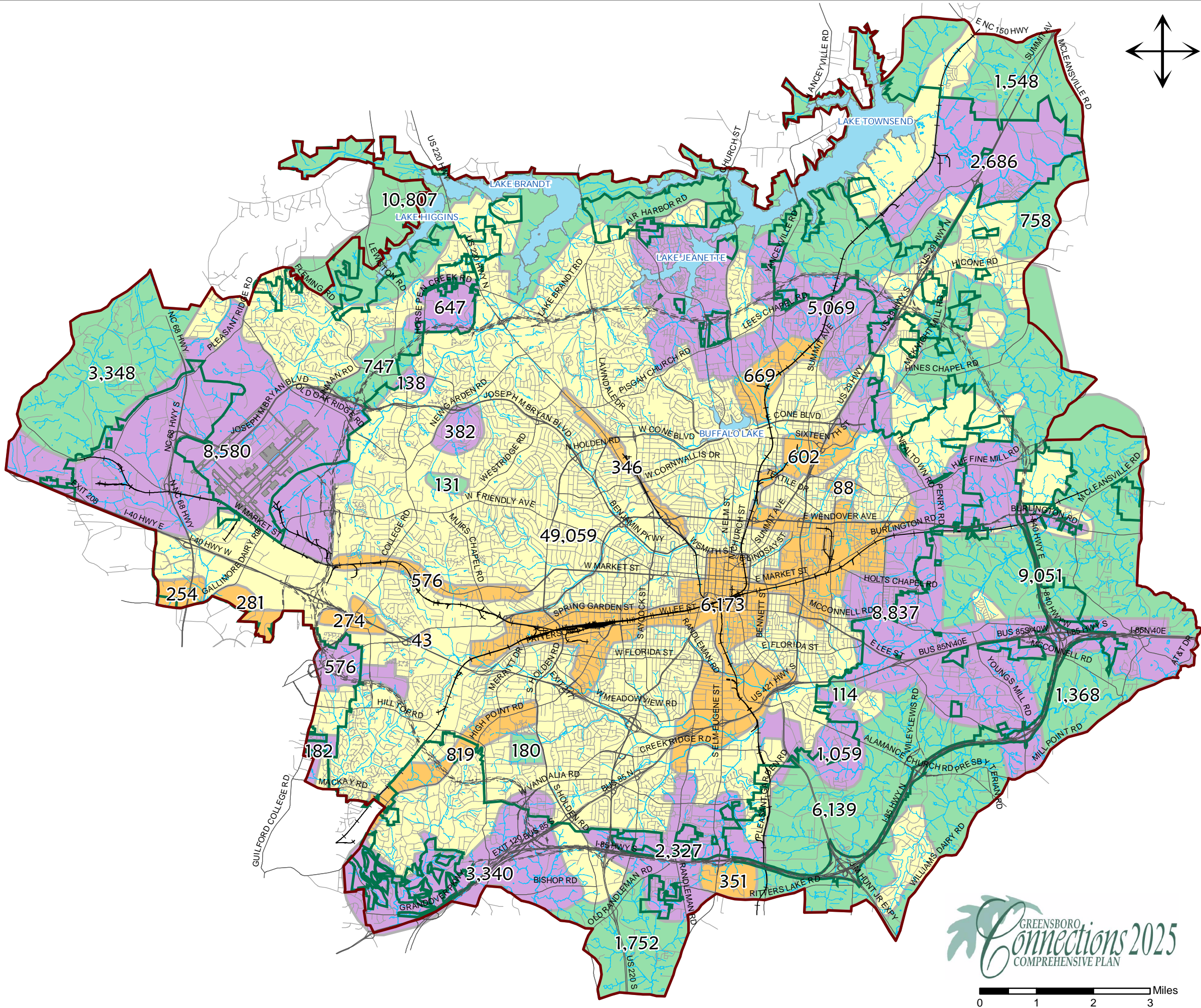
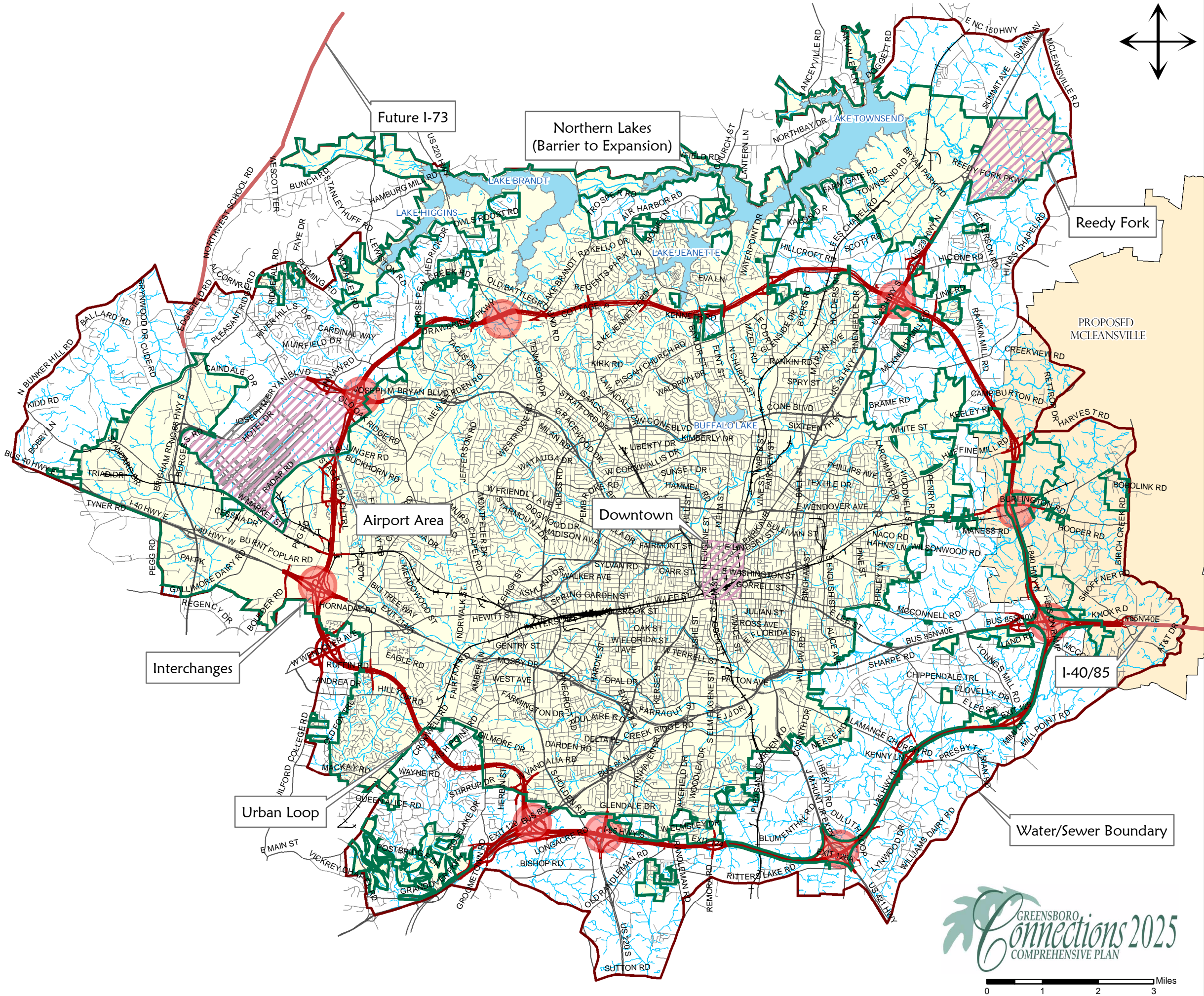


Figure 3-2
Plan Section 3.1.2

Factors For Change



- FACTORS FOR CHANGE
- Water/Sewer Boundary
 - I-40/85
 - I-73
 - Urban Loop/Interchanges
 - Reedy Fork
 - Downtown
 - Northern Lakes
 - Airport Area
 - Proposed Colfax
 - Proposed McLeansville

- Water Sewer Boundary
- Greensboro City Limits
- Existing Runways
- Railroad
- Streams
- Lakes

Figure 3-3
Plan Section 3.1.3

Trend Growth Scenario

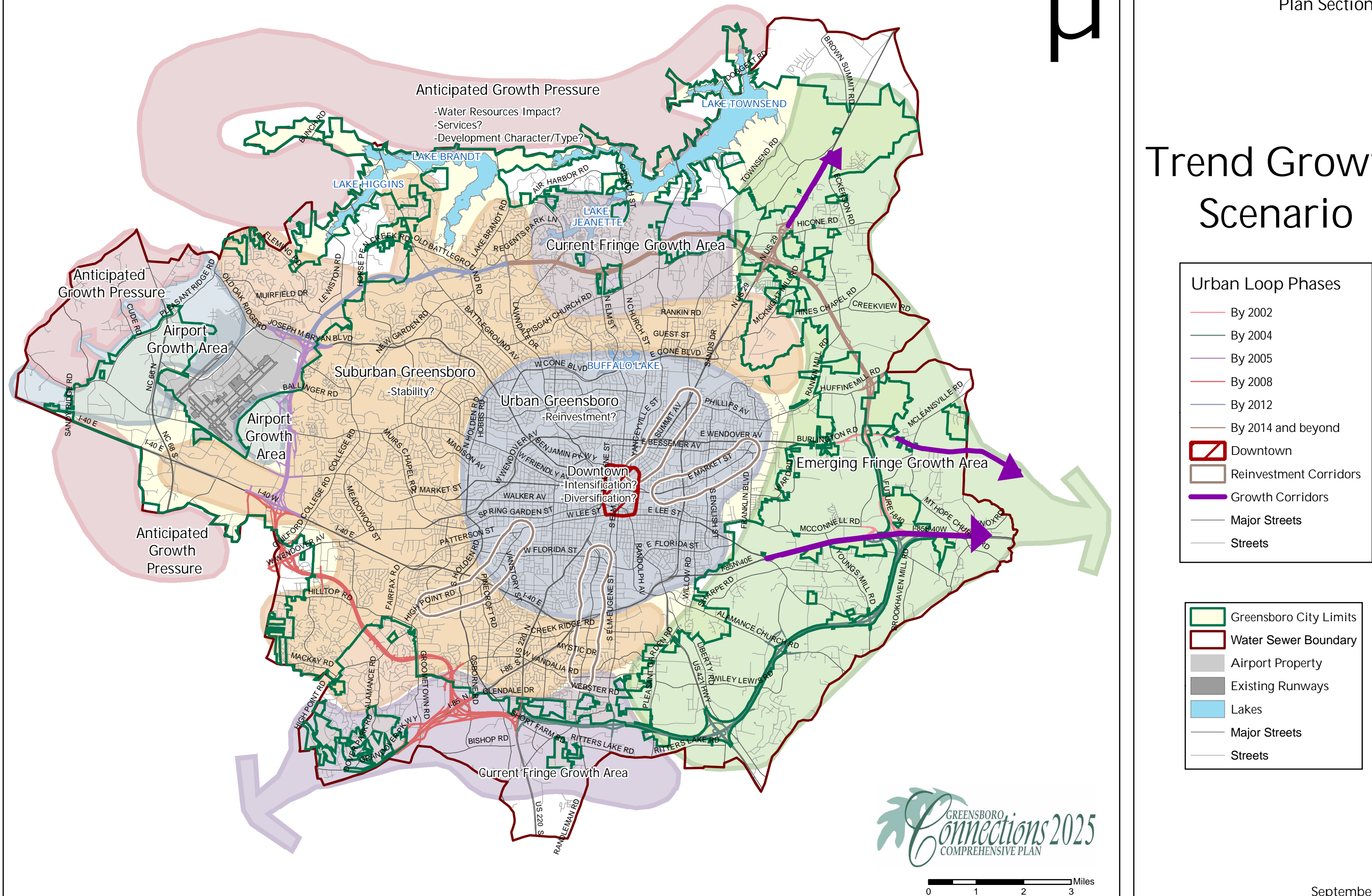
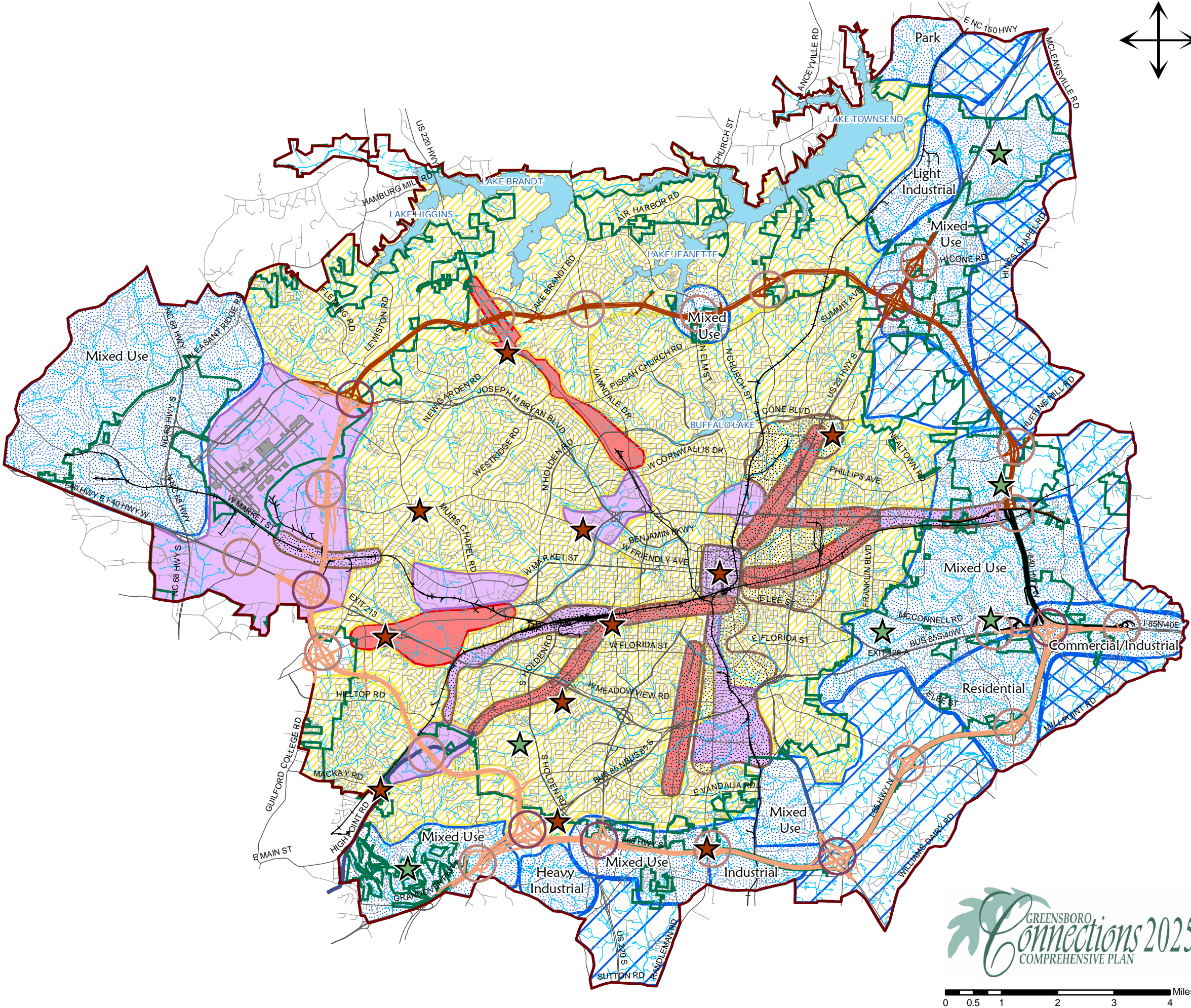


Figure 3-4
Plan Section 3.3

Preliminary Concept



Activity Centers

- Existing
- Future

Major Community Functions

- Employment
- Commercial
- Residential

Reinvestment Areas

-

Future Growth Tiers

- Current Targeted Growth +/-10 years
- Intermediate Targeted Growth 10-20 years
- Long Term Targeted Growth 20+ years

- Existing Urban Loop
- Local Access Interchange
- Freeway to Freeway Interchange
- Urban Loop Pre-2012
- Urban Loop 2012 and Beyond
- Water Sewer Boundary
- City of Greensboro
- Potential High Point Rd. Realignment
- Existing Runways
- Railroad
- Lakes
- Streams

GREENSBORO
Connections 2025
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

4.0 LAND USE

4.1 OVERVIEW

Effective July 1, 2007, the City Council adopted a new Water Sewer Service Area (WSSA) that is larger than the original study area that was used to develop this Plan. Therefore, some of the data (primarily sections 4.2 and 4.3) has become out-of-date and does not coincide with the new Generalized Future Land Use Map (Figure 4-2) and Growth Strategy Map (Figure 4-3). This data will be modified as part of the 5-year Plan update. (CP-07-15, Ord. No. 07-99, 6-19-07)

For decades Greensboro's pattern of land use has evolved based on a myriad of zoning, development, and annexation actions. These actions have often been triggered by individual private development initiatives, which in turn are often triggered by new roads and highways and other factors that influence development marketability and property values. Typically, actions on annexations and extensions of water and sewer service have been in reaction to individual private development requests. This response has led to the present pattern of highly fragmented sprawl at the urban fringe, a pattern which is fiscally and environmentally unsustainable and which compromises the economic viability of city's long-term growth. It is vital to the City's future that this reactive posture be reversed. Thus a major initiative in this Land Use Element is for the City of Greensboro to become more proactive in purposefully guiding growth patterns, through its regulatory powers and through its decisions on infrastructure investments and annexations, so as to ensure sustainable, long-term growth opportunities.

At present, the land area within the city limits is largely, but not entirely, developed and "built-out." Most developed areas of the City can be expected to remain stable over time, with little change in land use. In other areas of the City, particularly in Downtown, older neighborhoods, and along highway corridors, land use change can be expected to occur through economic obsolescence of outdated industrial and commercial areas, and through opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization. At the same time that these older urban areas will undergo change, the substantial undeveloped land area at the City's fringe, within the City's water and sewer boundary, will experience increasing

Sprawl is a broad term used to define low density, dispersed, and inefficient development patterns, which also may:

- Extend beyond centers of population, employment, and public services
- Consume excessive amounts of land, often at rates faster than population or economic growth
- Separate land uses and produce excessive reliance on automobile travel
- Produce revenues insufficient to cover public service and facility costs
- Displace important features of the natural or cultural landscape

pressures for new suburban "greenfield" development. Projected to accommodate several decades of "growing room," this area represents an essential resource to sustain the City's long-term expansion.¹ Vulnerable as it is to the many adverse impacts of sprawl and fragmentation, growth in this area should be carefully planned, managed and staged over time.

The City's Development Ordinance continues to provide a starting point for the rational organization of land uses suitable for urban and suburban development of various types. As the City continues to grow and change, new challenges are emerging which necessitate a comprehensive review of land use and development policy. Arising initially in the Vision Statement, and later confirmed in the evaluation of the Trend Growth Scenario conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process, the City of Greensboro is facing at least two substantial challenges in managing its land use and development patterns. The first of these is to **become more flexible and innovative** in protecting natural resources and community character while encouraging and promoting economic diversification through sound investment and development. The second challenge is one of **balance**: to ensure **wise stewardship of land along the fringe** while **promoting reinvestment** in Downtown and other older urban areas of the City. While such changes in the City's regulatory policies will provide greater flexibility and opportunities for innovative development, zoning remains a tool with greater usefulness in preventing poor development than in mandating creative, high quality development. For this reason, it is essential that the City move toward a new era of cooperative engagement with private sector development interests, encouraging and supporting innovation and wise development decisions through positive incentives, rather than through regulatory prohibitions and rigid codes.



Photo courtesy of Environment Colorado

Vision Statement

The following excerpts from the Vision Statement form the basis and the starting point for the development of the land use goals and policies contained herein.

¹ Documentation of the methodology used to develop the growth/capacity estimates is provided in *Working Paper: Results of 9/4-6/01 Comprehensive Plan Charette*, Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, November 2001.

Community Character

- Our **safe, well-maintained, livable neighborhoods** meet the basic needs of residents for a clean environment; decent, affordable housing; and convenient access to quality services such as shopping, parks, schools, and community facilities.
- Our **standards for development quality** reflect the special character we choose to maintain.

Sustainable Growth

Throughout Greensboro we see...

- **Balanced investment** and reinvestment across the City, creating quality urban, suburban and rural places that offer a choice of setting and lifestyle.
- **Compact development patterns** that incorporate mixed land uses and densities and which encourage transit, biking and walking...
- **Recycled vacant sites and buildings** that have been encouraged by supportive development policies.

At Greensboro's edges we see...

- Effective use of growth management tools to promote **wise, balanced and equitable growth**, while protecting rural lands from premature development and inefficient sprawl.
- **Coordination of development and infrastructure investment policies** by the City, Guilford County, area municipalities and other regional entities.

At Greensboro's center we see...

- A **vibrant Center City**, active day and night, that serves as the heart of our economic, cultural, and civic life and respects our historic heritage.
- Reclaimed buildings and revitalized neighborhoods and commercial areas
- A **balanced mix of uses and activities**, including employment, close-in urban housing, pedestrian-oriented shopping, and lively districts and activity centers...

In **other areas** of the city where needs had not been met we see...

- **Rejuvenated areas that have attracted new investment** and are vital and prosperous parts of our community, and which address past inequities and deficiencies.
- A **more balanced approach to capital investment** in these historically under-served parts of our community.
- Actions and resources committed to the task.

Economic Prosperity

- Through effective incentives and investment policies, we have achieved a more **balanced development pattern** serving all neighborhoods and quadrants of the City, particularly in areas such as East Greensboro, which had been under-served by certain desired types of development.
- We have carefully monitored, identified, and promoted **sites and districts** for appropriate types of economic development, including...urban area infill and redevelopment...

Comparison of Trend Growth to the Vision

By comparing the Vision Statement with present trends and likely future conditions based on these trends, attention is focused on needed changes in policy and strategy. Failure to put in place effective strategic "course corrections" could lead to some or all of the highly undesirable consequences. Section 3.2 of the Comprehensive Plan identifies areas of divergence between the components of the Vision Statement and the Trend Growth Scenario. The following are some key conclusions pertaining to land use:

- The potential under trend growth for decline and disinvestment in older commercial corridors and neighborhoods such as East Greensboro conflicts with the vision of "balanced investment and reinvestment across the City" and "revitalized neighborhoods and commercial areas." In addition, the Trend Growth Scenario indicates no relief for the eastern side of the community, which has seen little new development in past years and which is under served with retail uses.
- A continuation of current development practices and patterns will result in erosion of visual character, loss of open space and natural resources, and increasing auto dependency (rather than compact, pedestrian-friendly communities).
- Continuation of uncoordinated, piecemeal development at the edge between the City and County will result in inefficient, fragmented development patterns, costly demands to expand city services and facilities, and premature and accelerated loss of agriculture and rural, scenic character.

4.2 EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use in the study area (inside the city limits and in the fringe area from the city limits to the water/sewer boundary) is depicted in Figure 4-1 and tabulated by land use category in Table 4-1. Immediately apparent from this depiction is a clearly defined center of the City, with major highways radiating in all directions. Identified as its own unique land use category, Downtown is surrounded by older, mixed-use neighborhoods, as well as university and college campuses and other institutions and some of the City's oldest industrial areas.

Beyond this urban core area, the widening gaps between radiating highway corridors are less "mixed" in nature with low-density, single-family residential (yellow) emerging as the predominant pattern throughout the City. On close inspection, it is possible to perceive the pre-war and post-war "growth rings," as the urban grid pattern transitions to a more curvilinear suburban pattern of local streets. The influence of highway access can be readily seen with commercial uses (red) lining older highway corridors such as Battleground Avenue and High Point Road, or clustered in major concentrations such as the I-40 interchanges at West Wendover Avenue and High Point Road. A similar pattern can be seen with industrial uses. Older industrial areas can be seen lining the rail/highway corridors as they approach downtown along W. Lee/Spring Garden, Patton Avenue, and E. Market Street. However, reflecting changes in industrial transportation modes, newer larger industrial areas can be seen emerging near the airport and key I-40 and I-85 interchanges, which offer easy on-off truck access.

Overall the City's distribution of land use can be thought of in three broad categories: **where people live** (residential uses), **where people work and shop** (nonresidential uses), and land which is **undeveloped**. Single-family residential is the largest single land use category by a wide margin, covering nearly 31% of the City's land area. Another 6% is devoted to multi-family housing, bringing the proportion of the City's overall land area in residential use to 37%. While this proportion is not unreasonable, the fact that single-family residential areas exceed areas devoted to multi-family by a factor of 6 to 1 raises questions about the need for more diverse, affordable and compact housing choices.

"Employment" type land uses within the city limits, including Downtown, commercial, office, industrial, and institutional categories (where virtually all of Greensboro's jobs are located), total some 22% of the land area, a proportion that tends to decrease with distance from the City's center. Although it may appear that the City of Greensboro is almost fully developed or "built-out," nearly 30% of the land area is presently undeveloped, comprising the following categories shown on Figure 4-1 and in Table 4-1: public park land, private golf courses, private (owner association) open space, woods, open (undeveloped), and water. Approximately one-third of this category is permanently reserved as parkland, private (owner association) open space, or water. The remaining lands (approximately one-quarter of Greensboro's total land area) reflect the City's substantial infill development capacity and the presence of natural areas throughout much of the City.

Table 4-1. Existing Land Use Within Study Area (July 2002)

Land Use Code	City Land Use		Water/Sewer Boundary		Study Area Total	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	98	0.13%	15,051	25.59%	15,149	11.44%
Single Family	22,583	30.68%	14,126	24.02%	36,709	27.72%
Multi-Family	4,371	5.94%	700	1.19%	5,071	3.83%
Commercial	3,463	4.71%	617	1.05%	4,080	3.08%
Downtown	358	0.49%	n/a	n/a	358	0.27%
Office	1,133	1.54%	347	0.59%	1,480	1.12%
Institutional	3,498	4.75%	1,270	2.16%	4,768	3.60%
Light Industrial	3,957	5.38%	1,066	1.81%	5,023	3.79%
Heavy Industrial	3,828	5.20%	1,757	2.99%	5,585	4.22%
Airport Property	n/a	n/a	3,238	5.51%	3,238	2.45%
Open	2,498	3.39%	1,711	2.91%	4,209	3.18%
Woods	11,536	15.67%	13,187	22.42%	24,723	18.67%
Park Land	3,172	4.31%	1,278	2.17%	4,450	3.36%
Golf Courses (Private)	1,189	1.62%	117	0.20%	1,306	0.99%
Water	3,341	4.54%	142	0.24%	3,483	2.63%
Owner Association Open Space	249	0.34%	45	0.08%	294	0.22%
Right-of-Way	8,324	11.31%	4,155	7.07%	12,479	9.42%
Total	73,597	100.00%	58,807	100.00%	132,405	100.00%

Notes:

1. The study area includes the City of Greensboro plus the area outside of the current city limits within the water/sewer boundary.
2. The figures in this Table should not be compared with Table 4-2 and 4-3 (see notes on these tables).

At the City limits, particularly along the eastern fringe, the land use pattern changes abruptly, as the City's urban and suburban development directly abuts the County's largely rural/agricultural pattern. Although the fringe land area located outside the city limits and inside the water/sewer boundary comprises 24% single-family (mostly large lot) use, comparable to the percentage of single-family in the City, this is where the similarities end. Although there are a few sizeable areas of industrial use, the fringe area lacks significant proportions of commercial use, owing to the absence of major concentrations of population. Most striking about present land use in the fringe area is that it is largely (54%) undeveloped. Roughly similar proportions of land are in agricultural use and in the combined "woods" and "open" categories, with much smaller percentages in the other undeveloped categories. Table 4-2 tabulates existing land uses within the fringe area broken down according to the three growth tiers that are described in Section 4.4 and illustrated on the Growth Strategy Map (Figure 4-3).

Table 4-2. Existing Land Use Within Growth Tiers (July 2002)

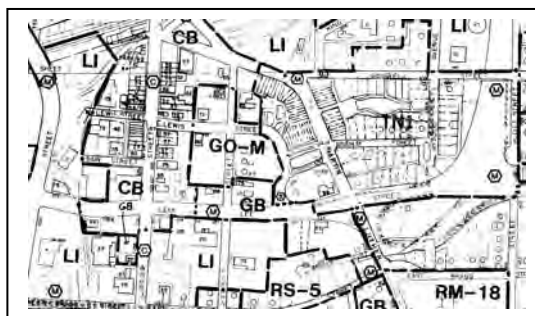
Land Use Code	Tier 1		Tier 2		Tier 3	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	8,372	22.54%	4,079	32.75%	2,059	33.91%
Single Family	7,451	20.06%	2,957	23.74%	1,649	27.16%
Multi-Family	372	1.00%	65	0.52%	81	1.34%
Commercial	614	1.65%	20	0.16%	79	1.31%
Downtown	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Office	531	1.43%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Institutional	753	2.03%	188	1.51%	209	3.45%
Light Industrial	1,733	4.67%	207	1.66%	1	0.01%
Heavy Industrial	1,390	3.74%	1,140	9.15%	31	0.52%
Airport	328	0.88%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Open	2,303	6.20%	266	2.14%	92	1.52%
Woods	9,416	25.36%	3,360	26.98%	1,761	28.99%
Park Land	271	0.73%	n/a	n/a	41	0.67%
Golf Courses (Private)	507	1.37%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Water	135	0.36%	74	0.59%	14	0.23%
Owners Association Open Space	37	0.10%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Right-of-Way	2,923	7.87%	99	0.79%	55	0.90%
Total	37,136	100.00%	12,455	100.00%	6,072	100.00%

Notes:

1. See Figure 4-3 for Growth Tier boundaries.
2. The figures in this Table should not be compared with Table 4-1. Some areas within the water/sewer boundary are not included in a Growth Tier because of local conditions such as existing development.

4.3 GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE

The desired future pattern of land use is generally depicted on Figure 4-2 and broken down into two sets of land use: Permanent and Interim. (CP-07-15, Ord. No. 07-99, 6-19-07) This Generalized Future Land Use Map should not be interpreted as a zoning map, nor is it appropriate for application at a parcel-by-parcel scale. Rather, it depicts broad policies for the future distribution of land uses and activity centers throughout the City to be achieved over a 10 to 20-year period. While significant revisions to zoning regulations will be required to implement these land use policies, future land use categories will often be applied with two or more zoning district designations. Such designations will be made based on detailed, site-specific considerations, which are beyond the broad scope and intent of a comprehensive



Example of zoning classifications from Greensboro Zoning Map

plan. As Connections 2025 is implemented, small area plans, neighborhood plans, corridor plans, etc. will be developed. These plans will be created at and depict a greater level of detail than the Generalized Future Land Use map (Figure 4-2). Therefore, any such plans adopted subsequent to adoption of Connections 2025 are incorporated into the Plan and referenced on Figure 4-2. All such plans shall be considered when making land development decisions. Greater emphasis should be placed on detailed policies, plans, studies and other documents over those setting forth generalized comprehensive planning objectives. (CP-04-12, Ord. No. 05-34, 2-15-05)

Table 4-3. Generalized Future Land Use

Land Use Code	Future Land Use		Tier 1	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Low Residential	42,494	32.09%	7,723	20.80%
Moderate Residential	9,246	6.98%	4,021	10.83%
High Residential	2,524	1.91%	195	0.53%
Mixed Use Residential	4,464	3.37%	2,223	5.99%
Mixed Use Planned Community	4,203	3.17%	4,191	11.29%
Mixed Use CBD	494	0.37%	n/a	n/a
Mixed Use Commercial	6,969	5.26%	1,454	3.92%
Mixed Use Corporate Park	8,636	6.52%	7,884	21.23%
Commercial	2,975	2.25%	240	0.65%
Institutional	2,685	2.03%	174	0.47%
Industrial/Corporate Park	15,692	11.85%	8,330	22.43%
Airport Property	3,401	2.57%	437	1.18%
Major Parks/Open Space	9,285	7.01%	264	0.71%
Other	19,337	14.60%	n/a	n/a
Total	132,405	100.00%	37,136	100.00%

Notes:

1. The "other" category contains the acreage within Tiers 2 and 3 for which land uses have not been determined.
2. See Figure 4-3 for Tier line boundaries.
3. The figures in this Table should not be compared with Table 4-1 because of the differences in use categories and the generalized nature of future land use.

When compared to the Existing Land Use Map (Figure 4-1) it is evident that planned future land uses (except in areas outside the City and within the water/sewer boundary) reflect patterns that are already well established throughout much of Greensboro. However, the policies and strategies identified below are designed to accommodate growth and change in new creative ways: by promoting greater flexibility within zoning districts, encouraging compact mixed uses, providing incentives for urban area development, and by raising standards for quality and protection of natural resources.(CP-07-15, Ord. No.07-99, 6-19-07)

As part of the new water and sewer agreement, Interim Land Use Classifications have been assigned to areas inside the new WSSA that have not previously had a land use classification on the Generalized Future Land Use Map. The Interim Land Use Classifications have been

put in place to give guidance on land use decisions in this area when water and/or sewer service is requested from the City. The Interim Land Use Classifications are fairly broad and will be further refined through a collaborative planning process, involving the City and the County, to develop a Fringe Area Land Use Plan. (CP-07-15, Ord. No. 07-99, 6-19-07)

The Permanent categories of future land use are:

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Industrial/Corporate Park
- Major Parks and Open Space
- Airport Property

The Interim categories of future land use are:

- Nodes of Mixed Use
- Residential
- Corporate/Business Park
- Potential Employment Center – Pending Further Study

All land use categories are depicted on Figure 4-2. Each of these categories is discussed in more detail below. (CP-07-15, Ord. No. 07-99, 6-19-07)

Permanent Land Use Categories

Residential

Low Residential (3 to 5 dwelling units per gross acre)

This category includes the City's predominantly single-family neighborhoods as well as other compatible housing types that can be accommodated within this density range. Although there are some existing residential areas in the City developed on lots greater than 1/3 acre, future residential developments and "conventional" subdivisions should generally maintain a gross density of no less than three dwellings per acre, except where environmental constraints (e.g., the Watershed Critical Area) prevent such densities from being achieved. Compact developments that include clustered, small lots with substantial retained open space are encouraged.

Moderate Residential (over 5 to 12 dwelling units per gross acre) (CP-04-12, Ord. No. 05-34, 2-15-05)

This category accommodates housing types ranging from small-lot, single-family detached and attached single-family dwellings such as townhomes to moderate density, low-rise apartment dwellings.



Southern Village - Chapel Hill, NC

High Residential (over 12 dwelling units per gross acre)

This category provides for high-density apartment dwellings, condominiums, life care, and similar housing types. Creating opportunities for this type of housing will become increasingly important to respond to demographic shifts and demand for affordable housing, and it is ideally suited near major activity and employment centers and in areas suitable for future transit service. Within this district, office buildings may also be accommodated. (CP-04-12, Ord. No. 05-34, 2-15-05)

As noted, all of the above designations may accommodate a range of compatible housing types, including single-family detached, attached dwellings such as duplexes and townhomes, and various other forms of multi-family housing. In addition, all three categories may support small supportive uses such as grade schools, churches, and neighborhood-serving commercial areas that are not always depicted on the Generalized Future Land Use Map. While these categories should not be interpreted as proposed future zoning districts, the policies presented in Section 4.5 below do indicate revisions to present zoning to simplify district designations and to accommodate greater flexibility in accommodating a variety of housing types.

Mixed Use

In Greensboro and throughout the nation, an unfortunate legacy of the zoning practice in the post-war period has been to promote a segregation of land uses into discrete and uniform residential, commercial, and industrial categories. The initial intent, to protect public health and welfare by removing noxious influences from residential areas, was valid. However, the result has been to segregate uses in suburban areas to such an extent as to create a total reliance on automobile travel for activities which formerly were located within convenient walking distance in older, more mixed-use urban settings. Such settings remain in Downtown and in Greensboro's historic in-town neighborhoods. Such patterns should be encouraged in suburban areas as well, by promoting varied mixed-use forms. In general, four forms of mixed-use development are recognized and encouraged, as follows:

- The first type includes **single buildings**, or clusters of connected buildings, **which incorporate two or more complementary uses**, as in the placement of offices or apartments above ground-floor retail businesses, a pattern common in downtown locations.
- The second type comprises areas **where one well-established use predominates**, but where **well placed complementary uses are appropriate**. Examples include residential areas within which neighborhood churches, schools, and "corner stores" can all be accommodated.
- The third type consists of **centers** with mixes of uses and activities that act as multi-purpose "destinations." These centers are characterized by shared parking and strong pedestrian linkages, where a variety of activities such as shopping, dining, entertainment, and dropping off children at school or day care can be accommodated by a single trip. This type is particularly useful in promoting use of public transportation. Likewise the introduction of higher density housing into such mixed-use centers can serve the needs of those who choose not to or are unable to rely on the automobile.
- The fourth type comprises large-scale **"planned developments"** designed to integrate a variety of complementary uses. Examples include traditional neighborhood developments (TNDs) which simulate urban settings with a compact, walkable mix of varied housing types, as well as neighborhood shops, services, schools, and recreation activities. Likewise, major corporate office parks incorporating complementary activities such as hotels, restaurants, recreation, health clubs, day care, and other services to meet the daily needs of workers and visitors are included in the category of planned, mixed-use developments.

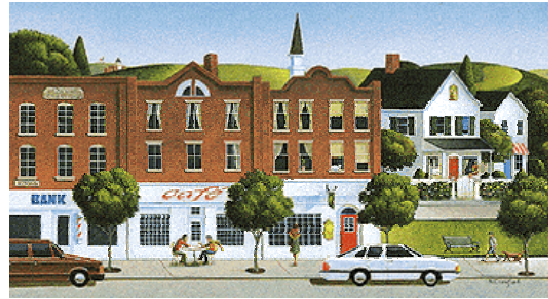


Illustration by Robert Crawford

All of these forms represent substantial opportunities to promote a more diversified, sustainable pattern of land uses and activities. They are suitable both in urban areas in need of reinvestment and in suburban or fringe areas, where they provide a sustainable alternative and antidote to sprawl. Mixed-use development forms support numerous Comprehensive Plan policies, including reducing auto trips, promoting a more walkable environment, and expanding the supply of higher density, affordable housing near employment and activity centers.

All of the forms of mixed-use development described above are beneficial and should be permitted and encouraged through incentives. However, certain types of use mixes offer

little or no benefit and may exacerbate land use conflicts and traffic congestion. Examples include non local-serving activities within neighborhoods that create excessive traffic, noise, security risks, or other conditions which detract from neighborhood quality of life and stability. Likewise, larger planned developments that incorporate unrelated or conflicting uses are to be discouraged. Examples include "conventional" suburban shopping centers which include disconnected "out parcels" for gas stations, fast food, or other forms of strip commercial which capitalize on the visibility and property values of highway frontages. By virtue of their separate vehicular access and absence of meaningful pedestrian linkages or use relationships, such development forms further increase vehicular trips and inhibit safe and efficient traffic flow. These forms are not legitimate mixed-use developments, offer no public benefit, and should be discouraged.

Five distinct mixed-use designations are shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, as follows:

Mixed Use Central Business District

This designation applies only in and around Downtown Greensboro. It emphasizes the urban character and the mix and intensity of activities uniquely suited to the central city. This designation is intended to permit a true mix of all uses, except heavy industrial, at the highest levels of scale and density within the City and with unique development standards tailored to the urban character of Downtown. It is particularly important to move the Downtown towards becoming a center of activity not only in the day, but also at night and during weekends, by promoting a mix of commercial, entertainment, residential, and other uses (see policies and narrative in Section 4.5.2). To help achieve this goal, creative forms of housing, such as lofts within restored historic structures and residential units in the often unoccupied second stories above ground-level retail, should be encouraged.



Mixed Use Residential

This designation applies to neighborhoods or districts where the predominant use is residential and where substantial, compatible local-serving nonresidential uses may be introduced. Such use mixes are typically found in older, in-town neighborhoods that accommodate "corner stores" and other local services, as well as in newly

developed traditional neighborhood developments (TNDs). This district is also applied in areas suited to a diverse mix of housing types and densities. Ensuring that buildings are of the appropriate scale and intensity is critical.

Mixed Use Commercial

This designation is intended to promote a mix of uses, of which various commercial uses remain predominant, but where residential, service, and other uses are complementary. Where applied to older highway corridors characterized by “strip” commercial uses, the intent is to encourage infill and redevelopment for a more diverse and attractive mix of uses over time. Examples include residential units over commercial uses or a wider array of economically viable uses to replace obsolete uses. Such areas also may represent opportunities for the introduction of substantial higher density and/or mixed-income housing, with negligible impacts on, or resistance from, nearby single-family neighborhoods. Ensuring that buildings are of the appropriate scale and intensity is critical, as is ensuring that sites are designed in a coordinated, as opposed to a lot-by-lot, manner. New “strip” commercial development is discouraged. (CP-04-12, Ord. No. 05-34, 2-15-05)



*Obsolete building redeveloped
– before and after*

Mixed Use Planned Community

This designation is intended for large tracts of undeveloped land near the City's fringe that are appropriate for larger scale, creatively planned residential, mixed with other uses such as supporting retail and small to medium scale office development. Compatibility among these uses and with the area's scenic character will be maintained through generous open space reservations and design standards that address the locations, character of, and relationships between uses, while affording greater development flexibility than provided by standard zoning district classifications. A traditional neighborhood development organized as a series of “neighborhood units” that have access to a “village center” with higher density residential, retail, and office uses is one example of an appropriate development form.



*Vermillion – Huntersville, NC
Photo courtesy of Bowman Development Group*

Mixed Use Corporate Park

This designation is intended for large tracts of undeveloped land near the City's fringe that are appropriate for well planned, larger scale business/employment parks with supporting uses such as retail, hotels, and residential. Primary uses such as office, flex office, technology research and development, light manufacturing, distribution,



and assembly are strongly encouraged to be developed prior to or in conjunction with any supportive uses. The primary uses should be developed in a campus-like or “corporate park” setting with generous, linked open space to maximize value and to promote visual quality and compatibility with the surrounding area. Pedestrian-friendly features such as buildings placed near the street, sidewalks, and trails leading to nearby uses such as retail and housing should be encouraged. (CP-04-12, Ord. No. 05-34, 2-15-05)

Commercial

This designation applies to large concentrations of commercial uses, such as recently constructed major shopping centers and “big box” retail. Such properties may not be expected to undergo redevelopment or a change in use over the plan horizon, and the immediate areas in which they are located may not be suitable for the introduction of mixed uses. While some new commercial centers are anticipated, in general new retail and commercial service uses will be encouraged within more diversified mixed-use centers rather than as stand-alone shopping centers or expanding highway commercial “strips.”

Institutional

This designation applies to university and college campuses, major medical/health care concentrations, and similar large-scale institutional activity centers.

Industrial/Corporate Park

This designation applies to areas where present or anticipated uses include both light and heavy industrial uses, such as manufacturing, assembly, and fabrication; wholesaling and distribution; and corporate office and technology parks, which may be introduced to replace older heavy industrial uses. Although new residential development is discouraged in areas designated for this land use category, pre-existing residential uses may be present in or adjacent to these areas. As established industrial areas redevelop, such residential, institutional, or similar uses should be protected from adverse impacts (heavy truck traffic, significant outside storage, factors such as noise, dust, and glare, etc.) through performance-based standards, buffers, and proper separation from noxious uses.



Major Parks and Open Space

This designation applies to existing large scale parks and protected open spaces of citywide significance which are expected to remain as open space in perpetuity. Potential future large-scale park acquisitions, as well as smaller neighborhood parks and recreational uses, are shown on the Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources map (Figure 5-1).

Airport Property

Airport property shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map represents land owned by the Piedmont Triad International Airport Authority. The predominant land uses are aviation-related activities, along with supporting uses such as a hotel.

In addition to the above land use categories, the Generalized Future Land Use Map displays some other information related to land use. This information includes major activity centers, the watershed critical area, and the noise impact area associated with the airport.

Activity Centers

Activity Centers are existing or anticipated future concentrations of uses that function as destinations or hubs of activity for the surrounding area. Typically located in areas of mixed use shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, such centers are intended to include features such as a mix of higher intensity uses (housing, retail, office, etc.), compact development patterns, and pedestrian and transit linkages. A one-half mile radius (considered the limit of a comfortable walk) is shown around each activity center except for the Downtown, which functions as an activity center for the entire City. It should be noted that the locations shown on the



Portland's Pioneer Place

Generalized Future Land Use Map are conceptual and do not preclude the development of Activity Centers in other locations where they would support the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Watershed Critical Area

Established pursuant to State of North Carolina environmental mandates, Watershed Critical Areas are overlays adjacent to a water supply intake or reservoir where the risk associated with pollution is greater than from the remaining portions of a water supply watershed. The Generalized Future Land Use Map shows the portion of the Watershed Critical Area for the Greensboro Water Supply Watershed that is located within the water/sewer boundary. This Watershed Critical Area drains to Lake Brandt, Lake Higgins, and Lake Townsend, which form the northern boundary of the Comprehensive Plan study area. The predominant land use designation in this area is low residential because of the environmental constraints associated with the Watershed Critical Area.

Airport Noise Impact Area

Derived from the Airport Area Plan adopted by Guilford County and endorsed by the City of Greensboro in 2002, the Airport Noise Impact Area is defined by the 60 DNL noise

contour associated with airplane traffic.² Residential land uses are discouraged within this area due to noise impacts.

Interim Land Use Categories

Nodes of mixed Use

Areas with a mixture of uses of high and moderate intensity, primarily providing services to the surrounding area (e.g. small to mid-size shopping areas that could include higher density housing, office, and institutional uses). These nodes are typically focused in the vicinity of local access interchanges at major roadway intersections.

Residential (generally at or above 3 dwelling units per acre)

Areas with a mix of all types of residential densities and uses (single family detached, single family attached and multi-family), with some limited local-serving non-residential uses (schools, churches, convenience services). It is assumed that most of the new housing developed in the Water Sewer Service Area would be connected to water and sewer.

Corporate/Business Park

Areas that predominantly consist of office, flex office, technology research and development, light manufacturing, distribution and other similar uses on larger sites, with much of it, in a planned business park setting that emphasizes natural characteristics and landscaping. The area may also contain supportive uses such as retail, hotel, restaurant, and residential development which customarily locate within planned employment centers. The supportive uses should make up less than half of the total area of the development. Developments should be designed to promote compatibility with adjacent uses.

Potential Employment Center – Pending Further Study

Areas that require further study to determine the best land use classification. These areas have been identified as potential employment centers primarily due to: topography, the existence of large parcels, proximity to other business uses, and convenient access to highways. In the process of developing a Generalized Future Land Use map utilizing the full range of permanent land use classifications, these areas will be studied in more detail and provide opportunities for input from citizens within these areas. (CP-07-15, Ord. No.07-99, 6-19-07)

² See the Airport Area Plan for complete information on different types of noise impact areas in the vicinity of the Airport.

4.4 GROWTH STRATEGY

The strategy for the future growth of Greensboro is based upon two fundamental principles:

1. Promote infill and reinvestments in urban areas in need of revitalization.
2. Manage growth at the City's fringe in a sustainable manner through the proper staging of annexation, development, and infrastructure extensions.

This growth strategy is depicted on Figure 4-3. This map delineates two separate concepts, each relating to one of the above principles:

- Reinvestment Areas and Corridors
- Growth Tiers

As described below, these concepts represent priority areas for application of the Reinvestment/Infill and Growth at the Fringe policies described in Section 4.5 below. However, a number of the policies listed under one of these categories have possible application to both (e.g., compact development patterns).

4.4.1 REINVESTMENT AREAS AND CORRIDORS

Reinvestment areas and corridors shown on Figure 4-3 represent priority opportunities for combined public and private sector reinvestment and the application of policies described in Section 4.5.1 (Reinvestment/Infill).

Reinvestment Areas

Reinvestment areas are neighborhoods and districts within Greensboro's urban areas that would most benefit from actions to promote compatible infill development and other forms of investment and reinvestment.

Reinvestment Corridors

Reinvestment corridors are older commercial corridors that would benefit from significant public and private investment to enhance their economic viability and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods.



4.4.2 GROWTH TIERS

Located primarily outside of the current city limits and inside the water and sewer boundary, Growth Tiers are areas where development, annexation, and extension of public facilities are

to be staged over a 20+ year period. Policies applicable to the Growth Tiers are presented in Section 4.5.3.

The Growth Tiers depicted on the Growth Strategy Map are a refinement of the Future Growth Tiers initially developed in the Preliminary Concept (see Section 3.4). It should be emphasized that the growth tiers lie predominantly outside the present City limits and remain under the regulatory authority of Guilford County until annexations occur. However, such designations articulate the City's policies governing the locations, patterns, and types of uses for which requests for water and sewer extensions and annexations are likely to be approved.

Growth Tier One is where development is expected to be concentrated and where services can be most easily provided within the next six years.

In Growth Tiers Two and Three, annexations will be discouraged until the full complement of City services can be efficiently provided, which is currently projected beyond the 6-year horizon. The Growth Strategy Map will be primarily used as a capital improvement and annexation planning tool and should be reviewed and updated annually prior to the budget planning process. (CP-07-15, Ord. No. 07-99, 6-19-07)

4.5 GOALS AND POLICIES

A number of policies for land use and development apply throughout the planning area (i.e., the area within the City's water/sewer boundary), such as increased flexibility, encouragement of mixed uses, and higher development standards. However, most policies are applicable to specific parts of the planning area where land use and growth challenges vary. Consequently, the Land Use Goals and Policies are organized in the following three subsections:

- Reinvestment/Infill
- Downtown
- Growth at the Fringe

4.5.1 REINVESTMENT/INFILL

A broad goal establishes the policy intent to promote infill and other forms of investment to maintain viable, equitable development throughout Greensboro's urban areas. Broad themes running through many of these suggested policies are to:

- Identify and remove present impediments or disincentives to development



- "Level the playing field" with development in fringe and suburban areas
- Position the City of Greensboro to more proactively target and carry out certain types of redevelopment in specific locations, such as East Greensboro and Downtown, to achieve the quantity and quality of investment needed to maintain the viability of urban areas.

GOAL

Promote sound investment in Greensboro's urban areas, including Center City, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods

POLICIES**4A. Remove present impediments to infill and investment in urban areas**

4A.1 Establish criteria that define the characteristics of **desirable infill development** (e.g., compatibility with adjoining uses).

4A.2 Revise zoning/development codes, the permitting process, and other applicable city policies by **identifying and removing impediments** to infill, adaptive reuse, historic preservation and reinvestment, including:

- Application of creative code provisions to remove impediments in building/zoning codes to reusing older buildings and retaining their historic character
- Overlay districts (within which specific requirements would be modified to allow established character to be maintained; e.g., buildings pulled up to the street, credit for on-street/shared parking, etc.)
- Coordinated city departmental policies regarding infill (e.g., adjusting requirements for stormwater, water/sewer, and other policies/regulations when they affect the ability to develop infill sites)
- Such measures shall not endanger public health, safety, and welfare.



4A.3 Adjust the City's schedule of development fees (e.g., development review fees and costs to upgrade infrastructure) to **lessen financial burdens on investments in designated urban areas** and more accurately reflect the different costs of providing

services in urban/infill areas (where infrastructure is available), suburban areas, and fringe areas (where costly infrastructure extensions are necessary).

Narrative:

Many of the City's code requirements were developed and applied well after much of older urban portions of Greensboro were originally developed. Due to constrained site and building conditions, many potential infill sites cannot, without great expense, meet current regulatory requirements (e.g., parking, setbacks, and stormwater standards), which are suited to more flexible suburban conditions. Policies 4A.1 to 3 aim to minimize all present **disincentives for investment in infill** and other forms of development throughout Greensboro's urban areas. This necessitates first identifying specific types of infill development that are compatible and desired. Once accomplished, City zoning regulations and codes must then be revised to remove unnecessary or inadvertent impediments, or to waive such requirements in designated urban areas.

4B. Target capital investments to leverage private investment in urban areas

4B.1 Conduct **community-wide public facility assessments** to identify and prioritize corrections to deficiencies in infrastructure, local streets and sidewalks, and other public facilities, including parks and recreation facilities.

4B.2 Through the City's Capital Improvement Program, **prioritize short and long-range capital investments** in designated urban areas, including but not limited to utility replacements, capacity improvements, area-wide stormwater systems, street improvements, etc.

4B.3 Identify **reinvestment corridors** for capital improvements (e.g., streetscape improvements, infrastructure upgrades, etc.).

Reinvestment corridors are older commercial corridors within Greensboro's urban areas that would benefit from significant **public and private investment** to enhance their economic viability and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods. They differ from ***visual enhancement corridors*** (described in Section 5.2.1 of the Community Character Element), which are roadways within the City that carry large amounts of traffic and would benefit from **public physical improvements** to address visual character. Although the concepts are different, certain roadways may be classified as both reinvestment and visual enhancement corridors.

Narrative:

Although the removal of regulatory and other constraints and disincentives is necessary to promote infill and urban area redevelopment, it may be insufficient to achieve the desired levels of investment. Policies 4B.1 to 3 move the City's posture beyond a "regulatory" mode and into a proactive posture by **targeting direct investments in capital improvements** as catalysts for private investment. While the City's

older urban areas have the benefit of a full complement of infrastructure and other public services and facilities, some of these facilities are deficient and may, therefore, reduce potentials for development. This policy series calls for a comprehensive reassessment of the City's facilities and infrastructure and a reassignment of priorities for capital improvements based in part on opportunities to leverage private investment.

4C. Promote new patterns and intensities of use to increase economic competitiveness and enhance quality of life in urban areas

4C.1 Establish **standards for** and actively promote new forms of **compact development** to include Transit-Oriented Development, as well as TND, Pedestrian Scale Development, and Mixed-Use.

4C.2 Establish **performance-based guidelines and incentives** for infill locations, including:

- Mixed residential uses/mixed uses where appropriate
- Connected, pedestrian-oriented streets
- Conditions for edge treatment (buffers, connectivity, compatibility)
- Flexible requirements such as dimensional criteria and parking to address local contexts
- Protection of adjacent uses and site-specific approvals shall be required.



Vermillion – Huntersville, NC
 Photo courtesy of Bowman Development Group

4C.3 Provide **density and intensity bonuses** for the provision of housing and commercial components of **mixed-use developments** with specific reference to dwelling types (student housing, elderly, etc.), with additional bonus provisions for affordable housing.

Narrative:

As noted in the review of existing land use patterns, single-family residential is the City's largest category of use. Single-family neighborhoods are a valuable resource, which should be protected from harmful influences. Nevertheless, the City should take every opportunity to encourage the introduction of new, more compact forms of development. Such opportunities include the introduction of higher density, smaller unit housing types to meet the needs of a diversifying population for appropriate affordable housing. Policy 4C.1 addresses this need by establishing standards for creative development types. Policy 4C.2

introduces the concept of performance-based guidelines. These guidelines will expand opportunities for infill development beyond what is possible under conventional zoning, which tends to separate uses and limit flexibility in development siting. In addition, the "bonus" provisions proposed by Policy 4C.3 provide a tangible economic motivation to introduce mixed-use, affordable housing and other needed development types.



While these guidelines and provisions for flexibility are necessary, they are not sufficient to fulfill the promise of greater infill investment and the introduction of higher densities. Many existing neighborhoods will tend to fear or resist the introduction of such new uses and perceive them as threats to neighborhood stability. While some of these concerns may be misplaced, they must be addressed by carefully examining how and where such uses can be introduced compatibly within neighborhoods and in transitional areas, areas of blight, and along roadway corridors. Because compatibility must be evaluated based on site specific investigation, more detailed neighborhood, corridor and sector plans will be needed to identify specific infill opportunities and create design criteria such as buffers which will ensure compatibility in particular circumstances. Neighborhood plans developed per the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 6A.1) can be used to discuss and develop consensus for potential infill development on appropriate sites.

4D. Identify potential opportunities and selectively target, plan and promote development/reuse initiatives

4D.1 Conduct a citywide inventory of **potential infill/reuse sites**, including historic sites/buildings suitable for adaptive reuse.

4D.2 Based upon the citywide inventory and neighborhood, corridors, and downtown planning initiatives, identify site-specific **development target areas and sites**.



4D.3 Provide direct action to initiate and support **private investment**, including land assembly and clearance, developer solicitation and selection, and construction of capital improvements.

4D.4 Encourage use of financial incentives for reinvestment in **historic and/or abandoned properties**.

- 4D.5** Provide incentives for the reintroduction of **neighborhood businesses and services into under-served older neighborhoods** (e.g., assistance with market studies, site assembly, environmental clearances, business capital investment, employee training, etc.).
- 4D.6** In coordination with other local governments, pursue **state legislative initiatives** to make additional financial tools available for investment (e.g., tax increment financing, tax abatements, differential development fee schedules, etc.).

Narrative:

While the preceding policies address removing impediments and creating incentives for private infill initiatives, Policies 4D.1 to 6 place the City in a **proactive posture** in actually targeting and carrying out revitalization projects through partnerships with the private sector. Reinvestment corridors and areas shown on the Growth Strategy Map (Figure 4-3) are priority locations for such actions. Opportunities for direct City action fall into three broad categories. The first category includes sizeable areas of the City where widespread deterioration and obsolescence, coupled with fragmented property ownership and expensive brownfield contamination (see Economic Development Policy 7C.3), may present too many obstacles for the private sector to address without city assistance. Such areas will include older industrial areas, as well as obsolescent commercial "strips." A second type may include a major civic facility (ballpark, arena, or performing arts center) for which no suitable site exists. This would necessitate action by the City in assembling and preparing such a site in partnership with a private or non-profit development entity. A third category pertains to the emergence of new patterns of obsolescence that may emerge in suburban locations. Many predict that a number of present low margin, poorly designed, and inexpensively built "big box" shopping centers will present future opportunities for redevelopment as they succumb to ever-changing consumer patterns and preferences. In these circumstances the City should be prepared to intervene by preparing small area or "focal" plans and various implementing actions to rebuild and reuse these sites for higher value uses.



4.5.2 DOWNTOWN

While parts of Downtown and nearby older neighborhoods have seen progress in recent years, Greensboro's center city remains an under-used asset. The area has the potential for significant additional investment and diversification if the necessary public-private initiatives move forward. However, without such initiatives, Downtown could be vulnerable to stagnation or even decline, given its present reliance on relatively few major employers. There have been several plans for Downtown, most recently the *Greensboro Center City Plan* sponsored by "Action Greensboro." This plan makes a series of recommendations to create a more vibrant, attractive Downtown with a mix of commercial, cultural, educational, entertainment, residential, and recreational uses. Included is an "Urban Design Framework" that proposes establishing guidelines for the design of new development in the Downtown.



Center City Plan Concept

The *Greensboro Center City Plan* indicates a substantial level of public investment in new streets, parks, water features, and other amenities. However, the City of Greensboro has not taken a leading role in such planning and has yet to indicate what investments it is prepared to make, in partnership with business and development interests, to ensure that Downtown continues to grow, diversify, and prosper. The following policies are intended to increase the City's leadership role in promoting and providing the public investments and catalysts for change that will carry out the vision of a thriving, exciting Downtown Greensboro.

GOAL

Promote reinvestment, preservation, diversification, and selective intensification of activity in Downtown Greensboro, to reinforce its importance as the economic, cultural and civic center of the City while protecting its heritage and historic resources and enhancing its urban character

POLICIES

4E. Promote diversification and intensification of Downtown Greensboro

4E.1 Maintain a **proactive program of city initiatives** to promote downtown development through:

- Capital investments to streets, streetscapes, infrastructure and parking
- Establishment of site-specific downtown redevelopment and reinvestment areas
- Use of existing City powers (eminent domain, land assembly, bonding, etc.) to execute designated reinvestment projects

4E.2 Actively **support private initiatives** consistent with the City's policies to promote downtown investment by:

- Creating incentives for mixed use, downtown housing, and the creation of new centers of activity in Downtown (employment, retail, entertainment, sports, etc.)
- Adjusting capital improvement programs to target streets, infrastructure, and parking as necessary to promote and support desired private investment

4E.3 Ensure that public and private initiatives preserve and enhance **historic downtown resources**.

Narrative:

Comparable to Policies 4D.1 to 6, this policy series places the City in a more proactive posture in promoting its vision of Downtown, one in which new development and investment are actively pursued to strengthen and diversify the land use and activity mix of center city. The City will continue to be supportive of, and responsive to private initiatives through incentives, public parking, and capital improvements. In addition, these policies call for the City to develop its own **action agenda** for Downtown, including the identification of reinvestment areas and plans for area-wide improvements to streets, parking, and urban design amenities. As recommended in the *Greensboro Center City Plan*, guidelines should be established to ensure that new development complements the established character of the Downtown's neighborhoods and corridors, including the preservation of significant historic resources.

4.5.3 Growth at the Fringe

Analyses of the Trend Growth Scenario and related issues indicate that, contrary to the Vision Statement, the area within the water and sewer boundary could well experience fragmented development patterns (sprawl) with associated negative fiscal impacts and loss of rural character. This scenario is supported by the following:



- Growth "capacity" within the water and sewer boundary is likely more than double the land area that is projected to be absorbed over the 20-year plan horizon.³
- The City and County lack major "form-givers," substantial incentives, or annexation criteria that would lead to compact or contiguous development.
- The City's lowest density (AG) zoning district provides for 1 dwelling/acre, a density which is not conducive to protecting rural lands, discouraging sprawl, or encouraging optimum economic use.
- The City does not presently apply specific, consistent criteria for the review of annexation requests. Such requests are considered on an ad hoc basis, without benefit of a defined plan or concept for desired future development patterns.

Each discrete annexation and approved development in the fringe area entails a City obligation to extend infrastructure and provide a full array of police, fire, and other facilities and services, at the taxpayer's expense. Documentation nationwide demonstrates that low-density, "sprawl" forms of urban fringe development rarely provide the tax revenues sufficient to offset the public costs incurred. Consequently, a reversal of this trend is needed to avoid negative fiscal consequences.

Likewise, the consumption of fringe area land by isolated, fragmented, low intensity development in the short term reduces the supply of land which will be needed for employment, commercial centers, and other uses necessary for sustainable, long-term growth. The following Goal and Policies provide the necessary long-range perspective and a framework for guiding sound growth along the City's fringe.

³ Documentation of the methodology used to develop the growth/capacity estimates is provided in Working Paper: Results of 9/4-6/01 Comprehensive Plan Charette, Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, November 2001.

GOAL

Provide a development framework for the fringe that guides sound, sustainable patterns of land use, limits sprawl, protects rural character, evidences sound stewardship of the environment, and provides for efficient provision of public services and facilities as the City expands. Development will increase density and mix land uses at a pedestrian scale with sidewalks, bikeways, and where possible, public transit.

POLICIES

4F. Initiate a fringe area growth management framework comprising the following elements [see also Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Policy 9A.1]

4F.1 Create a **Fringe Area Land Use Plan** in coordination with Guilford County (conceptually designating future land use patterns, including mixed use centers, commercial areas, rural preservation areas, land use interchange analysis for all interchanges on the urban loop, etc.). (CP-07-15, Ord. No.07-99, 6-19-07)

4F.2 Establish a **“tiered” approach** that designates **growth areas** for staged development, annexation, and extension of public facilities within the water and sewer service boundary:

- ***Tier One (Current Growth Area):*** Where infrastructure systems are in place, can be economically provided and/or will be proactively extended and where continued annexation and consolidation of the City’s development pattern shall be encouraged over the next six years
- ***Tier Two (Intermediate Growth Area):*** Where growth, annexation, and the extension of public facilities is anticipated in 6 to 12 years, and where premature, fragmented, leapfrog, or inefficient development shall be discouraged by the City and County
- ***Tier Three (Long-Term Growth Area):*** Where growth, annexation, and the extension of public facilities is anticipated beyond 12 years, and where premature, fragmented, leapfrog, or inefficient development shall be discouraged by the City and County.

(CP-07-15, Ord. No.07-99, 6-19-07)

Narrative:

Discussed extensively in the Sections 4.2 and 4.3, the purpose of the **tiered growth concept** for the fringe area is threefold:

- To promote contiguous and compact expansion of the City's edge
- To avoid excessive public expenditures on new facilities and services associated with fragmented, leapfrog development patterns
- To protect land which the City will need to sustain its long-term growth from premature development

The intent is to consider annexations and focus capital investments in Tier One for approximately the next six years. However, the City can consider significant development initiatives in Tiers Two and Three. Factors to be taken into consideration in reviewing such development proposals include:

- The extent to which they pay the costs of or otherwise justify public facility and service extensions
- Significant economic development benefits provided
- Consistency with adopted growth and development policies, such as compact, mixed-use, sustainable development

As indicated in Policy 4F.1, the City and County should collaborate in the creation of a **Fringe Area Land Use Plan** that both jurisdictions will adopt, along with consistent development standards. This task will require more detailed, small area planning that will likely involve breaking the fringe area down into smaller pieces and prioritizing where to begin. Areas within Tier One, particularly the mixed-use corporate park area inside the urban loop between US70 and I-40, should be considered priorities. One such planning challenge will be to study in detail the development opportunities and suitabilities surrounding each interchange of the Urban Loop. Such planning should be completed and the resulting land use measures put into effect well before development pressures occur as each interchange is opened. Without careful planning and fine-tuned development guidelines, these key development opportunity sites may become missed opportunities for optimum economic development, efficient traffic management, and the protection of nearby residential and corporate office development from the types of visually blighting, disjointed land use patterns which are already evident at several I-40 and I-85 interchanges.

(CP-07-15, Ord. No.07-99, 6-19-07)

4F.3 Define specific **criteria for water and sewer extensions and annexations**, to include:

- Contiguity with development patterns and present City limits
- Location within appropriate growth tier
- Availability of infrastructure capacity
- Consistency with city development standards
- Fiscal impact assessment and mechanisms for the allocation of public facility costs through a capital recovery fee [see Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Policy 9A.3]

Narrative:

Although the tiered growth concept provides a rational framework for staging fringe area development and annexations, the City is under no obligation to accept any and all development in Tier One. This policy encourages the City to carefully examine each development application based on consistency with land use policies and a careful assessment of impacts, the full range of public costs to be incurred, and the revenues that will accrue to offset those costs. As noted previously, public costs incurred to support fringe area "greenfield" development is often an order of magnitude greater than for comparable infill development where all or most public facilities and services are already in place. Therefore, this policy suggests the creation of a **capital recovery fee** or similar mechanism, to more equitably assign costs and to reduce reliance on the citywide tax base to subsidize fringe area growth. These policies are not intended to suggest that fiscal assessment and a capital recovery fee should be applied so as to annex only those developments that fully "pay their own way." However, such tools will allow both citizens and elected officials to make decisions based on a thorough knowledge of their fiscal consequences.

- 4F.4** Initiate designation of the fringe as Greensboro's **extraterritorial jurisdiction** (to give Greensboro development control within the area likely to be annexed).
- 4F.5** Establish a **proactive plan to provide infrastructure** (water, sewer, and roads) in advance of development, consistent with the growth "tiers" and Fringe Area Land Use Concept Plan (to provide city infrastructure where development is desired, with the developer bearing the responsibility of providing adequate infrastructure outside of the growth tiers). [see also Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Policy 9A]

4G. Improve the quality and patterns of development through incentives and regulatory guidelines

- 4G.1** Promote **compact development** (Traditional Neighborhood, Planned, Mixed-Use, and Pedestrian Scale Development) by applying creative zoning/development standards. [See also Policy 4C.1]

- Designate conceptual locations for mixed use centers, commercial areas, etc. (per Fringe Area Land Use Concept Plan – 4F.1 above)
- Establish performance-based regulations and incentives for more locationally flexible (overlay) development
- Mixed-use development
- Rural "village center/hamlet" designation
- Traditional Neighborhood development (TND)
- Enact standards to promote walkable communities (e.g., reduced street widths for local streets, sidewalks, minimum building setbacks, etc.)
- Revise residential zoning districts to encourage mixed housing types within developments

4G.2 Coordinate infrastructure policies to ensure that they are consistent with compact development designations.

4G.3 Create a "Conservation Development" Zoning District (similar to Guilford County Rural Preservation District). [see also Community Character Policy 5A.3]

Narrative:

Innovative, compact development patterns such as mixed use districts and TNDs are described in detail elsewhere in the Land Use Element. In addition to these development types, two additional patterns are highly desirable in fringe areas: "village centers/hamlets" and "conservation developments."

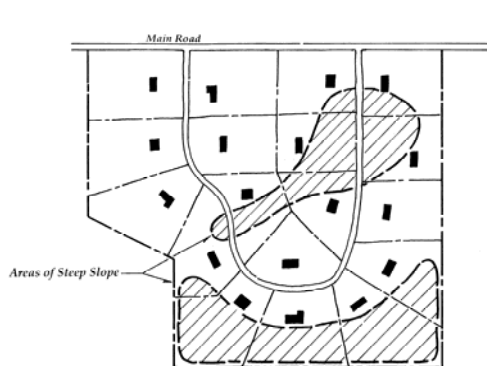
Village centers or hamlets are enclaves of clustered, small lot residential development along with compact arrangements of commercial and civic uses serving the surrounding population. These forms are highly preferable to the more typical pattern of lining home sites and randomly placing commercial uses along rural roads.



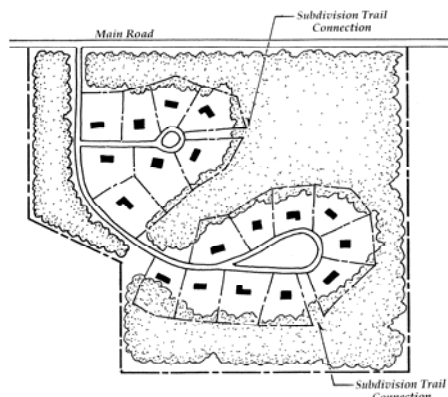
Home sites along rural road

Conservation development is an approach to the design of residential subdivisions which is highly suited to rural, fringe areas where the retention of scenic, rural character is desired. Typically, the concept is applied by permitting smaller, clustered lots, in return for the preservation of generous amounts of open space. For example, in a district zoned for a gross density of two units per acre, this would mean permitting the same number of dwellings on quarter acre rather than half acre lots. Such an arrangement would provide the same number of salable homes while preserving roughly half of the site as permanent open space. This approach is highly advantageous both to the public and to private developers. It reduces the

costs of public services and makes available generous open space with no public cost of acquisition. Conversely, advantages to developers include:



Example of conventional subdivision



Example of conservation development

Source: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

- It improves development profitability by lowering development costs for roads and utilities.
- It provides tax advantages from open space easements or dedications.
- It raises the sales value of residential lots abutting permanently protected scenic open space.
- It provides additional wildlife habitat that otherwise would have been sacrificed.

Conservation developments are most often applied in rural and agricultural areas, to allow farmers and other large land owners to achieve an economic return from partial development, while continuing to farm or otherwise retain large sections of permanent open space. However, the concept also has great value in developing fringe areas that will inevitably become urbanized. In Greensboro's fringe areas this pattern will allow the retention of much of the area's scenic rural character and open space, but at somewhat higher densities and without the retention of farming operations.

4G.4 Develop a **Fringe Area component** of a more detailed **Open Space and Greenways Plan**, in coordination with the County. [see also Community Character Policy 5A.1]

- Identify Priority Conservation Areas (high value woodlands, agricultural lands, and other natural/scenic resources to be subject to special protective measures, acquisition, etc.)

Purchase of development rights, or PDR, is a voluntary program used by governmental jurisdictions to maintain land in agricultural or conservation uses by compensating landowners for the value of the development rights on the property. PDRs allow properties to remain in private ownership without being developed in the future.

- Establish funding sources for acquisition (e.g., fee simple or "purchase of development rights" (PDR))
- Further utilize partnerships with land trusts (e.g., Piedmont Land Conservancy) to secure conservation easements within priority conservation areas designated in the plan

4G.5 Expand designation, definition, and protection of **scenic roadways** in coordination with Guilford County. [see Community Character Policies 5C.2 and 5F.1]



Narrative:

By virtue of its largely undeveloped character, Greensboro's fringe represents a significant opportunity to retain **open space** and protect the character of its many **scenic rural roads**. Opportunities abound for protection using a variety of mechanisms, including fee simple acquisition, the most appropriate tool for the acquisition of properties for public access and recreational use as parks and recreational trails.

However, other tools can be used to preserve open space at little or no taxpayer cost. These include the application of conservation development (Policy 4G.3 above), through which lands within private developments are protected via conservation easements, land dedications, deed restrictions or other similar legal means to prevent future development. Although such lands may be conveyed to the City or County, such dedications are preferably made to appropriate land trusts such as Piedmont Land Conservancy. This effort should be a mutual, coordinated undertaking of the City and Guilford County, beginning with the identification of "priority conservation areas," or those lands and natural features of greatest value for preservation (key habitats, woodlands, viewsheds, stream corridors, etc.). Every effort should be made to identify greenway connections to provide for wildlife habitat corridors as well as maximum public trail access. Likewise, priority conservation areas should be used by the City and County as guides in the designation of open space to be preserved in private developments, as well as in the purchase of land and development rights.

Likewise, the City and County should pursue the development of similar guidelines for scenic roadways, including priorities for designation and corridor development guidelines.

Generalized Future Land Use Map

Figure 4.2

Original Adoption May 6, 2003
Last Amended: February 19, 2010

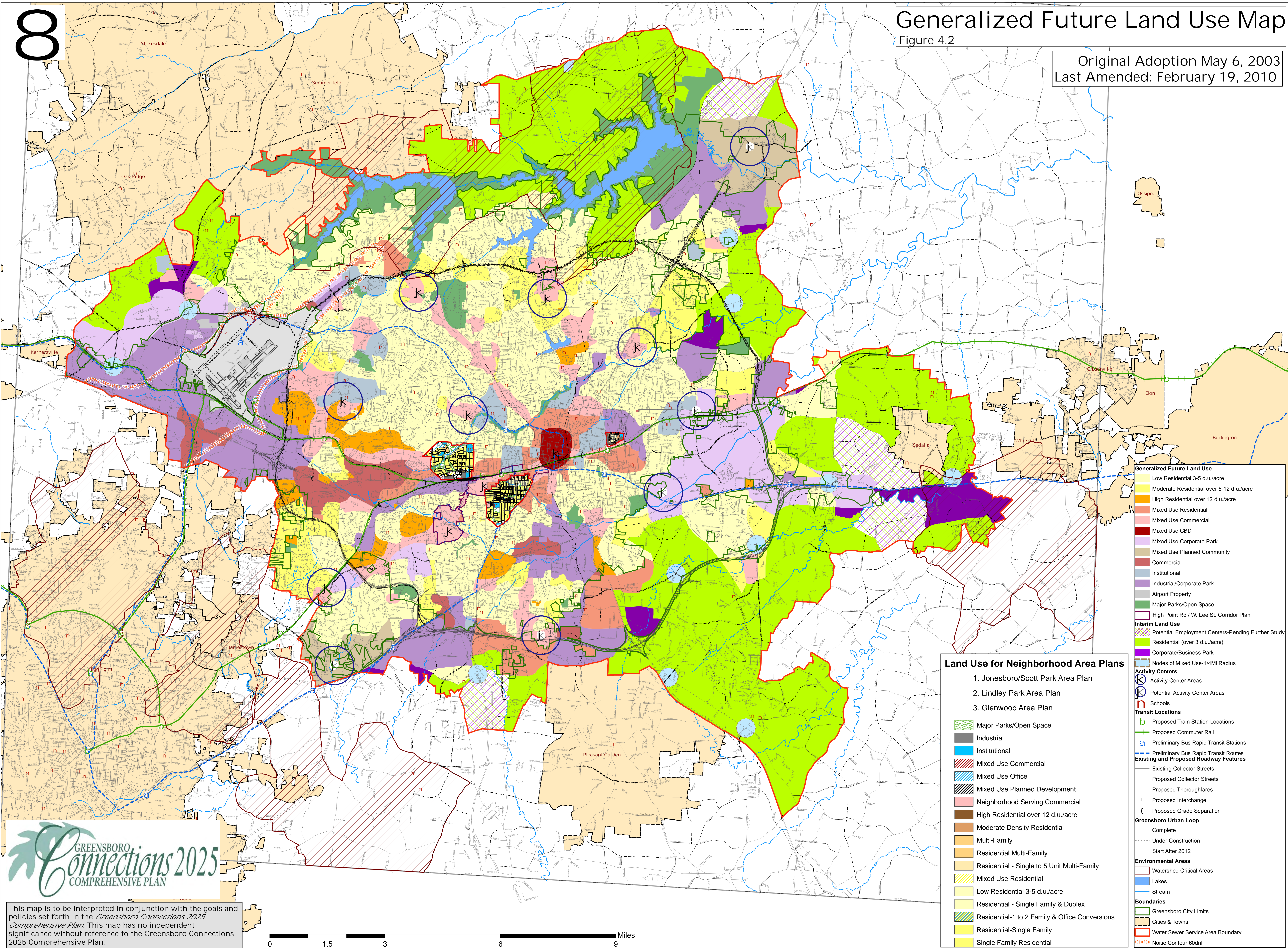
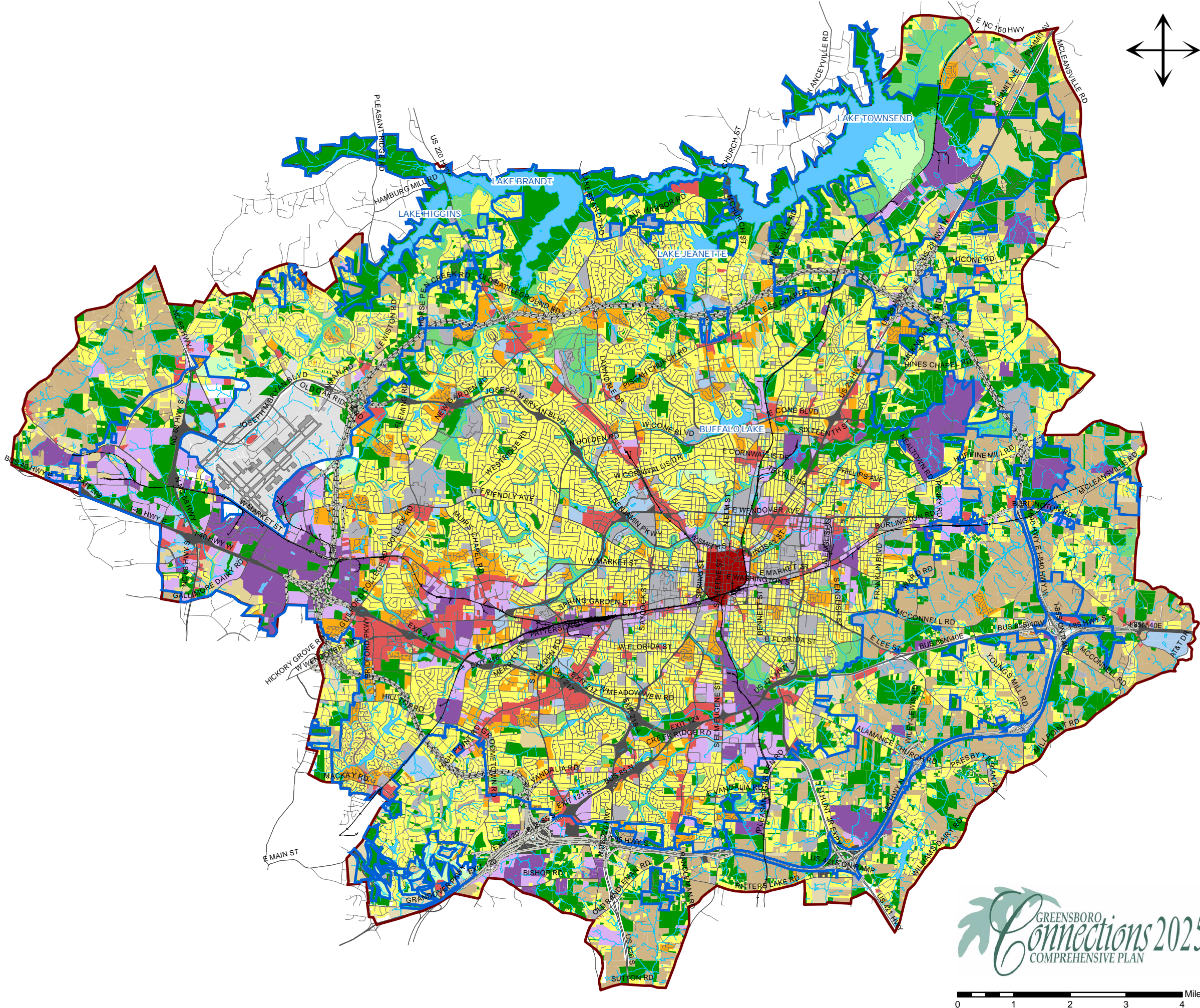


Figure 4-1
Plan Section 4.2

Existing Land Use



Note: Map reflects estimated conditions as of June 2004.

5.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is essential to the quality of life of Greensboro's citizens. According to the Vision Statement, community character encompasses a range of factors, including:

- Protected natural and scenic resources
- Livable neighborhoods
- A reputation as the safest city in America
- History and heritage
- An active cultural life
- Visual character
- Accessible parks and open spaces
- Standards for development quality



Several of these factors are addressed by other Comprehensive Plan elements. This Community Character element focuses on those factors that define the environmental and aesthetic quality of Greensboro's physical setting, including:

- Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources
- Man-Made Environment (historic resources and the appearance of public and private development)

5.1 PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

5.1.1 OVERVIEW

Enhancing the beauty of Greensboro through the provision of a comprehensive system of parks and greenways and the protection of irreplaceable natural and scenic resources constitutes a key area of community consensus identified in the Vision Statement. The City has plans and policies in effect for park and greenway development, most notably the *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (March 1998) and associated implementation program. However, commitment of additional resources will be required to implement a comprehensive parks and greenway system in accordance with the Vision. Likewise, while Greensboro has regulatory provisions for tree protection, stream corridor buffers, and open space preservation, these provisions do not offer the degree of protection needed to achieve the Vision Statement. If current trends continue, open space, tree canopy, and other scenic natural resources will continue to be eliminated and fragmented. As an example, a *Tree*

Canopy Study completed by the City in 2001 revealed through comparative analysis of satellite imagery that substantial "de-forestation" of Greensboro occurred between 1983 and 2000 as a result of development and natural causes.

Figure 5-1 shows the following information related to Greensboro's parks, open space, and natural resources:

- Existing and proposed **trails**.
- Existing and proposed **parks and open spaces**. The proposed park locations are derived from the 1998 *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. The circles shown on the map (1/2 mile radius for neighborhood parks and 2 mile radius for community parks) represent the areas within which proposed parks should be located.
- **Natural heritage sites** identified by the Piedmont Land Conservancy in conjunction with the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. These sites contain plant communities and natural habitat areas determined to have countywide significance.
- Stream corridors shown on the City's **Drainageway and Open Space Map**, defined as the 100-year floodplain or 100 feet from the centerline of the stream, whichever is greater (see also narrative for Policies 5A.1 and 2).
- **Wetland soil types** based upon the *Soil Survey of Guilford County, North Carolina* (published by the Soil Conservation Service in December 1977).
- Open water (**streams and lakes**).
- Streams classified as **impaired** by the State of North Carolina. Streams classified as **not supporting** are chemically, biologically, or physically impaired to the point that they do not support fish and aquatic life, water supply (within water supply watersheds), agriculture, wading, boating, fishing, and other designated uses. Streams classified as **partially supporting** are chemically, biologically, or physically impaired to the point that they only partially support such uses.



Water Quality Sampling

5.1.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL

Protect and restore Greensboro's irreplaceable scenic and natural resources: its system of parks and greenways, urban and woodland tree canopy, stream corridors and wetlands, and air and water quality

POLICIES

5A. Establish an expanded network of parks and greenways [see also Land Use Policy 4G.4 and Transportation Policy 8B.4]

5A.1 Expand the present city **parks and greenways system** in accordance with a more detailed Open Space and Greenways Plan, building on the City's Drainageway and Open Space Map:

- Identify Priority Conservation Areas (high value woodlands, agricultural lands, and other natural/scenic resources to be subject to special protective measures, acquisition, etc.) to be added to the greenway plan
- Expand "linkage elements" (trails, bikeways, scenic road corridors, stream corridors, habitat corridors, etc.) to improve connectivity within the greenway system
- Establish urban and downtown parks and greenways as part of the overall system

5A.2 Accelerate **implementation (funding)** of the Open Space and Greenways Plan:

- Create dedicated funding sources for long-term acquisition of park and greenway lands
 - Bond program
 - Dedicated tax revenue
 - Consider enactment of a parkland dedication ordinance (land or cash in-lieu-of)
- Expand incentives for voluntary dedications and easements
- Continue partnerships with private land trusts and seek support from community foundations (e.g., conservation easements within designated conservation areas, land acquisition, maintenance and management, etc.)

- Encourage dedication and/or acquisition of public access easements within stream corridors that are potential elements of the greenway system



Narrative:

Policies A.1 and A.2 relate to updating, expanding, and implementing the City's 1998 *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* to achieve a comprehensive, interconnected **parks and open space system** within the City of Greensboro and its future growth area in Guilford County. The 1998 Plan provides a guide for the provision of park and recreational facilities by the City through the year 2017, including six community parks, 16 neighborhood parks,

one community center, two large regional recreation centers, one special use athletic/sports park and 20 miles of greenway. Land for two of the community parks (Carolyn Allen Park and Keeley Park) has already been acquired. In 2000 Greensboro citizens approved bond funding of \$34.2 million for renovations and improvements to recreational facilities. However, additional investment is required if a truly comprehensive parks and greenways system incorporating key natural and open space resources in addition to parks and recreational facilities is to be achieved. In addition, an open space and greenways strategy is needed for adjoining parts of Guilford County where most of the remaining undeveloped land is located. This strategy could build on the *Guilford County Parks and Open Space Inventory* completed by the Guilford County Open Space Committee in 1999.

Developing a comprehensive parks and greenways network is important not only to community character but to other Comprehensive Plan elements as well. Land Use Policy 4G.4, for example, speaks to the need for the Open Space and Greenways Plan to address the "Fringe Area" outside current city limits but within the City's water/sewer boundary. Transportation Policy 8B.4 identifies a system of off-street trails as a vital component of the City's transportation system. The City's **Drainageway and Open Space Map** adopted in June 2001 provides the foundation for defining an expanded network of greenway corridors as the key linkages in the parks and greenways system. The City can require dedication of greenway corridors along drainageways shown on this map within new subdivisions. Expanding the greenway system will involve defining additional critical connections within the current city limits and extending the network into Guilford County as part of a regional trail system.

A multi-faceted strategy will be necessary to implement the comprehensive parks and greenway system, including public funding from a variety of sources, private landowner

conservation in coordination with nonprofit organizations, and potential regulatory approaches. One regulatory approach, a **parkland dedication ordinance**, is used by numerous communities throughout the country to help provide for the park and recreational needs of residents of new developments. The Comprehensive Plan proposes that this approach be evaluated by the City to determine whether it would be appropriate to apply in Greensboro.

5A.3 Establish enhanced regulations to promote **open space dedications in new developments**. [see also Land Use Policy 4G.3]

- Establish a minimum 10-15% open space set-aside requirement for subdivisions above a specified size (e.g., somewhere in the range of 80-120 lots or 30-40 acres)
- Provide increased density (e.g. minimum lot size reduction) incentives for open space/natural area reservations above the 10-15% minimum

5A.4 Require **dedication of land** along designated streams and “missing links” in the greenway system at the time of development. [see also Transportation Policy 8B.4]

Narrative:

Minimum open space and greenway linkage requirements for new developments are regulatory approaches that are used by many communities around the nation to meet open space and greenway needs. Such dedications **enhance the value of developments** by providing open space for the use and enjoyment of residents while contributing to a community-wide open space system. Dedication requirements can be coupled with **flexible lot size** standards to maintain overall yield, with **density incentives** provided for developments that dedicate open space in excess of the minimum requirement.

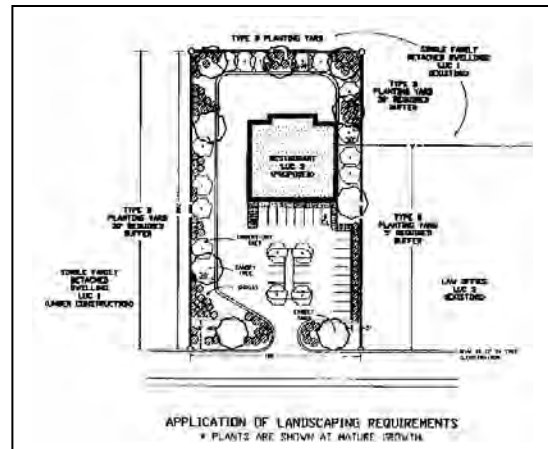


5B. Expand regulatory and incentive provisions to protect natural resources

5B.1 Provide additional **incentives** to protect existing trees in commercial and residential areas.

5B.2 Adopt minimum standards for **tree planting/landscaping applicable to new developments and retrofits** within all districts with appropriate exemptions for affordable housing [see also Community Character Policy 5F.3]:

- Establish standards for single-family and two-family developments (i.e., tree and shrub plantings in yard areas)
- Create street tree planting requirements within the right-of-way for residential developments. Provide options for commercial developments to plant trees within the right-of-way, with appropriate credits towards the required street planting yard
- Improve current landscape standards (such as encouragement of canopy trees, flexibility of planting yards, parking lot landscaping and screening, and increased emphasis on use of xeriscaping principles)



Example of planting yard

Narrative:

Greensboro's tree canopy in urban, suburban, and natural (forested) settings is a precious resource that not only contributes to the visual quality of the community, but also performs vital environmental functions such as improving air and water quality and lessening climatic extremes. Regulatory changes are proposed to enhance protection of existing trees and tree plantings in new development. In 2000, the City adopted **tree preservation requirements**. These requirements are now in need of “fine tuning” to provide incentives to encourage the protection of existing trees above the minimum requirements. Landscaping requirements should be strengthened by establishing minimum street tree planting requirements and planting requirements for residential developments. **Xeriscaping principles** such as the use of vegetation that is drought tolerant and water-wise planting techniques should be emphasized for all developments. As described in Community Character Policy 5F.3, requirements for retrofitting existing developments to add landscaping would apply to commercial developments under defined conditions such as a change of use. Tree planting requirements for residential properties would apply to **new construction only**, with enforcement by the City ending with issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.



5B.3 Strengthen **stream corridor protection** to protect water quality [see also Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Policies 9B.4 & 5]:

- Increase dimensions of required stream corridor buffers outside water supply watersheds
- Study and consider expanding the number and type (e.g. intermittent) of stream corridors designated for protection
- Expand requirements for undisturbed buffers within designated stream corridors (to maintain natural vegetation and topography, prevent erosion and sedimentation, promote water quality, etc.)
- Review and consider enhancing requirements to protect steep slopes (exceeding 15%) along stream corridors

5B.4 Strengthen **floodplain management standards** (FEMA and non-FEMA streams) [see also Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Policies 9B.4 & 5]:

- Prohibit development within portion of floodplain (10-year)
- Reduce building footprints/filling within the 100-year floodplain
- Raise finished floor elevation within the 100-year floodplain
- Develop options/incentives to eliminate development within the 100-year floodplain

Narrative:

The original intent of the stormwater standards was to minimize flooding. There was little recognition of water quality protection. Policies 5B.3 and 5B.4 propose that Greensboro's existing **stream buffer and floodplain management standards** be strengthened to better protect stream water quality and habitat values and to minimize flood damage resulting from inappropriate development within the 10 and 100-year floodplain. Greensboro's present stream buffer regulations are extremely complex, varying according to whether the stream is located within a Greensboro water supply

Different Types of Streams

Perennial streams are well-defined channels that, during normal conditions, receive inputs from both surface runoff and groundwater, and contain measurable discharge year-round (except during periods of drought). These streams exhibit biological, hydrological, and physical characteristics that are indicative of the continuous conveyance of water.

Intermittent streams are channels that receive inputs from both surface runoff and groundwater during normal conditions, and contain measurable discharge during wet periods of the year. They typically lack flow during dry periods when they become disconnected from the water table, and water in the channel is often reduced to a series of isolated pools. Intermittent streams are distinct from *ephemeral streams or ditches*, which receive inputs only from surface runoff and contain measurable discharge only after rainfall events.

watershed area, Greensboro watershed critical area, Randleman Lake water supply watershed area, or the approximately two-thirds of the City that does not fall within any of these categories. Examples include:

- Intermittent stream buffers are required only in the Randleman Lake water supply watershed.
- Required buffer widths (along perennial streams only) in the Greensboro water supply watershed areas are 30 feet on each side of the stream for low-density development and 100 feet for high density development, while 50-foot buffers are required outside of water supply watershed areas.
- Outside of water supply watershed areas, the first 15 feet of the stream buffer must remain undisturbed (i.e., in natural vegetation). The only requirement for undisturbed buffers in the water supply watershed occurs when the stream is located in the watershed critical area.



Perennial Stream

The current regulations should be **strengthened and simplified** to the extent possible given state regulatory requirements. When considering changes to these regulations, a stakeholder group should be formed to develop the possible modifications. These requirements should address maintenance of a buffer of riparian vegetation along streams, which is critical to supporting water quality and providing natural flood storage.

The current standards for development within the 100-year floodplain are based upon guidelines established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Policy 5B.4 proposes that these standards be “fine-tuned” to better protect floodplain values, with an emphasis on providing **feasible options and incentives** for development to reduce floodplain impacts (e.g., by clustering buildings away from frequently inundated areas). FEMA’s floodplain maps are based on mapping done in the 1980s and do not reflect the effects of recent or future development on floodplain conditions. The City is currently developing updated floodplain maps for different watersheds within Greensboro to show the



Intermittent Stream



Ephemeral Stream

100-year floodplain based upon existing conditions and future build-out. While adoption of the updated maps as official FEMA maps will depend upon federal and state action, they can be used for planning purposes in strengthening the City's current floodplain management standards.

5C. Implement a Greening Greensboro initiative

5C.1 Initiate a community-wide **tree planting/re-vegetation** program:

- Establish a community "tree endowment fund" with tree planting "vouchers"
- Identify and prioritize areas impacted by urban tree mortality for replanting through public/private action
- Identify corridors that predate the landscape ordinance and are in need of remedial vegetative treatment, and establish methods for improving them

5C.2 Designate **gateways, scenic corridors, and other community landmarks** for beautification investments, including maintenance. [see also Land Use Policy 4G.5 and Community Character Policy 5F.1]

Narrative:

Given the findings of the 2000 *Tree Canopy Study*, tree and landscape planting programs are warranted at both the neighborhood and community scales to replace and enhance Greensboro's established tree cover. **Greening Greensboro** is envisioned as a community-wide tree planting and re-vegetation program encompassing both public and private action. In implementing this program, partnerships between the City and organizations such as schools, neighborhood associations, civic clubs and environmental groups should be pursued. Grant funding sources could be pursued to help establish a "tree endowment fund," with tree planting "vouchers" made available to local residents. American Forests, a national organization that is sponsoring a "Global ReLeaf" initiative, is a potential resource and source of information.



Tree planting and re-vegetation efforts should be coordinated with the related policy initiative proposed in Policy 5C.2 to improve the **visual character of key locations** within

the City (gateways, scenic corridors, etc.) through public investments such as landscaping, streetscape improvements, public art, and signage (see Policy 5.E.1 below). Older commercial corridors in need of enhancement should be priorities for application of this policy.

5.2 MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT

5.2.1 OVERVIEW



Greensboro's history and heritage; the visual character of roadway corridors, gateways, and landmarks; and the quality of private development are all components of community character addressed by the Vision Statement. Although considerable loss of historic buildings and properties has occurred over the years in the downtown and other parts of the City, Greensboro still possesses significant historic resources. Currently three Local Historic Districts and 11 National Register Historic Districts are

designated. National Register listing provides tax incentives for preservation but provides no protection against loss of historic properties. Local district and landmark designation, however, does protect historic character through a design review process. On one hand, community character is being successfully preserved in Greensboro's three local historic districts. On the other hand, other early Greensboro neighborhoods and the downtown continue to lose historic character through demolition and inappropriate alterations to buildings and their historic settings. Local historic district designation is controversial because it is a regulatory process. However, it is an extremely effective tool for preserving historic character, which is essential if the City is to capitalize on the heritage tourism potential of "Old Greensborough" and surrounding historic neighborhoods. Because historic resources are such an essential ingredient of community character, their protection should be considered in public and private planning activities. [See also Land Use policy 4E.3] To help ensure that historic resources are considered during the development process, the Guilford County and City of Greensboro's inventories of historic resources should be entered into a database that can be accessed through the City's Geographic Information System.

Maintaining and improving the visual quality of the built landscape – particularly the view from major corridors through the City – is another key issue. Greensboro citizens expressed concerns during the planning process regarding the appearance of new development in areas such as Wendover Avenue, which is dominated by automobile-oriented, “big box” retail development. It should be noted that the City has adopted several zoning districts, including Planned Unit Development Infill (PDI), Traditional Neighborhood (TN), and Pedestrian Scale Overlay (PSO), that are intended in part to improve the visual character of development. In addition, scenic corridor overlay districts have been created establishing design standards for several types of roadway corridors that occur throughout the City.

Key components of Greensboro’s man-made environment are illustrated on Figures 5-2 (Community Structure) and 5-3 (Historic Resources). Figure 5-2 shows the following components of community structure:

- **Major Activity Centers** are existing or anticipated future concentrations of uses that function as destinations or hubs of activity for the surrounding area. A one-half mile radius (considered the limit of a comfortable walk) is shown around each activity center.
- Proposed **Gateways** are identifiable entrances to the City located on well-traveled roadways or interchanges. Gateways should be considered for public physical improvements to address visual character (see Policy 5E.1).
- Two types of corridors are significant to visual character. **Scenic Corridors** are major thoroughfares that are proposed for application of overlay districts with standards for visual character (see Policy 5F.1). The City has already designated two scenic corridors, NC Highway 68 and the Urban Loop. **Visual Enhancement Corridors** are thoroughfares that carry large amounts of traffic and would benefit from public physical improvements to address visual character (see Policy 5E.1). One roadway – Wendover Avenue from Battleground Avenue to just west of US Route 29 – is designated as both a Proposed Scenic Corridor and Proposed Visual Enhancement Corridor.

Gateways are identifiable entrances to the City located on well-traveled roadways.

Visual enhancement corridors are roadways within the City that carry large amounts of traffic and would benefit from **public physical improvements** to address visual character. They differ from **reinvestment corridors** (described in Section 4.5.1 of the Land Use Element), which are older commercial corridors within Greensboro’s urban areas that would benefit from significant **public and private** investment to enhance their economic viability and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods. Although the concepts are different, certain roadways may be classified as both reinvestment and visual enhancement corridors.

Figure 5-3 shows the following historic resources:

- Properties and districts listed on the **National Register** of Historic Places.
- Properties designated as **Historic Landmarks**.
- Local **Historic Districts** designated by the City of Greensboro.
- Properties and districts that have been placed on a study list as **Potential National Register** properties and districts.

5.2.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL

Preserve and enhance the character and visual quality of Greensboro's built environment, including historic resources, private developments, and public landscapes

POLICIES

5D. Preserve and promote Greensboro's historic resources and heritage

5D.1 Establish and maintain an ongoing **historic survey program**.

5D.2 Support the **protection of historic resources** identified by the survey program through techniques such as:

- Designation of new Local and National Register Historic Districts and/or Landmarks
- Planning, zoning, and plan review processes
- Historic preservation easements



Narrative:

The first step in preserving historic resources is identification. The last **surveys of historic resources** were the 1976 historic architecture survey for the City (updated in 1989) and the 1996 historic architecture survey for the County (excluding the City of Greensboro). These surveys need to be updated to include structures and areas that may now qualify as historic.

At a minimum, the updated inventory should be conducted for the City and the area of the County within the water and sewer boundary. Ideally however, the survey should be coordinated with Guilford County to inventory the entire county as one project. This work can build upon existing information maintained by organizations such as Preservation Greensboro, Inc., Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission, Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office and the Greensboro Historical Museum. The inventory will provide a basis for identifying potential local and National Register designations, with citizen concurrence. As noted above National Register designation does not provide the regulatory protection afforded by Local Historic Districts, which are overlay zoning districts that require a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior changes to buildings.

To promote preservation of significant historic resources, relevant information from the inventory should be made available to property owners who may qualify for rehabilitation tax credits and taken into consideration in planning and regulatory processes. **Private actions to preserve historic resources**, such as adaptive reuse of buildings and easements to preserve the historic integrity of properties, should also be encouraged.

5D.3 Promote Greensboro's historic and cultural resources (e.g., the Greensboro Historical Museum, Civil Rights Museum, etc.) as part of a **heritage tourism initiative** to attract visitors to the city while increasing local awareness and pride in the community's heritage.

Narrative:

Historic resources contribute to community character by enhancing visual quality and sense of place and by building local pride and identity. In addition, they can **contribute to economic development** by attracting visitors interested in the City's heritage. Greensboro has a long and rich history and offers existing attractions and resources of potential interest to visitors. Following the lead of many communities throughout the



country, the City and other interested organizations at the local and regional levels should consider developing a **heritage tourism strategy** to develop, link, and promote area historic attractions. This effort should build on current efforts by the Greensboro Area Convention

and Visitors Bureau to highlight Greensboro's heritage resources through publications and advertisements.

5E. Improve the aesthetic quality of publicly owned and maintained landscapes

5E.1 Identify funding sources and develop a phased capital program to implement visual improvements (e.g., landscaping, streetscape, public art, and signage) to **gateway entrances, landmarks, major corridors, and** other key locations in the City. Collaborate with Greensboro Beautiful Inc., the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and other agencies in this effort.



Market Street - Before

Narrative:

Targeted investment in visual improvements to public places will contribute to achieving the Vision Statement directive to enhance the visual character and image of Greensboro. In addition, it will complement the "Greening Greensboro" planting initiative proposed by Community Character Policy 5C.1. Because of the limited availability of public funding, identifying priority locations and types of improvements to be phased in over time will be a necessary step. The **gateways** and **visual enhancement** corridors shown on Figure 5-3 are key priorities for such treatments. Public/private partnerships should be sought to support both initial installation and long-term maintenance.



Market Street - After

5E.2 Develop design standards for **public buildings and spaces**.

Narrative:

The visual character of the public realm (buildings, landscapes, and infrastructure) helps to define the image and identity of a community. From this perspective, **quality design** should be an integral part of public development projects by the City. Clear, simple design principles and standards should be defined and followed in such projects to help ensure that they reinforce the Vision Statement objective of development quality and set a positive example for private developments.

5F. Implement and improve design standards governing the appearance of development from public roadways

5F.1 Implement **scenic corridor overlay districts** establishing objective appearance standards along different types of roadway corridors (setbacks, screening/buffers, landscaping, lighting, signage/billboard controls, building materials, architectural features, etc.) [see also Land Use Policy 4G.5 and Community Character Policy 5C.2]

Narrative:

This policy proposes that the scenic corridor overlay districts under development by the City be implemented to include standards for the appearance of new development as seen from designated scenic roadways. Other communities in North Carolina and elsewhere in the country use appearance standards applied through overlay districts to maintain and improve the visual character of roadway corridors. **Scenic corridor overlays** should be applied to controlled access highways and major and minor thoroughfares throughout Greensboro based upon their function and visual character.

5F.2 Building on current zoning districts with established design standards (PDI, TN, PSO, etc.), improve **design standards for new development** to enhance community appearance and sense of place. Address both city-wide standards and context-sensitive standards for local districts within the City identified as having a special visual character. Areas of focus include:



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- Commercial development
 - “Big box retail” standards (i.e., standards to address the visual impacts of large commercial developments, such as building siting, mass, and orientation; facade treatment; location and size of parking lots; landscaping; etc.)
 - Standards for smaller scale, pedestrian-oriented developments
- Standards to address visual impacts of intense land uses on adjacent neighborhoods and public roadways (e.g., lighting, buffers, screening of visually intrusive elements, etc.)

- Signage standards (sign type, size, height, lighting, etc.)
- Access management and connectivity

Narrative:

Greensboro's current regulations generally establish the minimum standards acceptable (e.g., lot size and building setback) rather than addressing the **desired result** in terms of visual character and quality, an effort that will rely on somewhat more qualitative criteria (e.g., design guidelines). Many communities in North Carolina and across the country apply design standards and guidelines addressing the appearance of new development. In addition to helping to maintain visual character, clearly articulated standards improve the predictability of the review and approval process for developers and residents alike. In Greensboro, improved design standards are needed to realize the Vision Statement objective of setting **standards for development quality** to maintain the community's special character. Consistent with concerns expressed by citizens during the planning process regarding the visual quality and neighborhood impacts of large-scale commercial uses, the standards should focus on the impacts of non-residential (and large-scale multi-family) development on public roadways and adjacent land uses. The City already has design standards in place for the Planned Development Infill (PDI), Traditional Neighborhood (TN), and Pedestrian Scale Overlay (PSO) Districts, which can be used as a starting point for developing improved design standards. This effort should be coordinated with the development of enhanced landscape standards (Community Character Policy 5B.1) and standards for scenic corridor overlay districts (Community Character Policy 5F.1) to avoid unnecessary duplication and complexity of regulations.

5F.3 Identify equitable mechanisms to **retroactively apply selected design standards to existing developments** (e.g., by phasing in application of landscaping and signage requirements to established developments over a period of time)

Narrative:

Older commercial corridors with existing developments that pre-date current design standards are an important issue related to aesthetic quality. While it is not appropriate or feasible to require established uses to comply with current design standards, the City should explore ways to bring such uses into compliance with key requirements over time. Examples include requiring compliance with the new standards at the time of a change of use, or requiring that implementation of improvements to meet the standards be amortized over a period of years.

5F.4 Improve **corridor design standards and implementation tools** to preserve and enhance trees, medians, berms and other amenities that improve right-of-way appearance

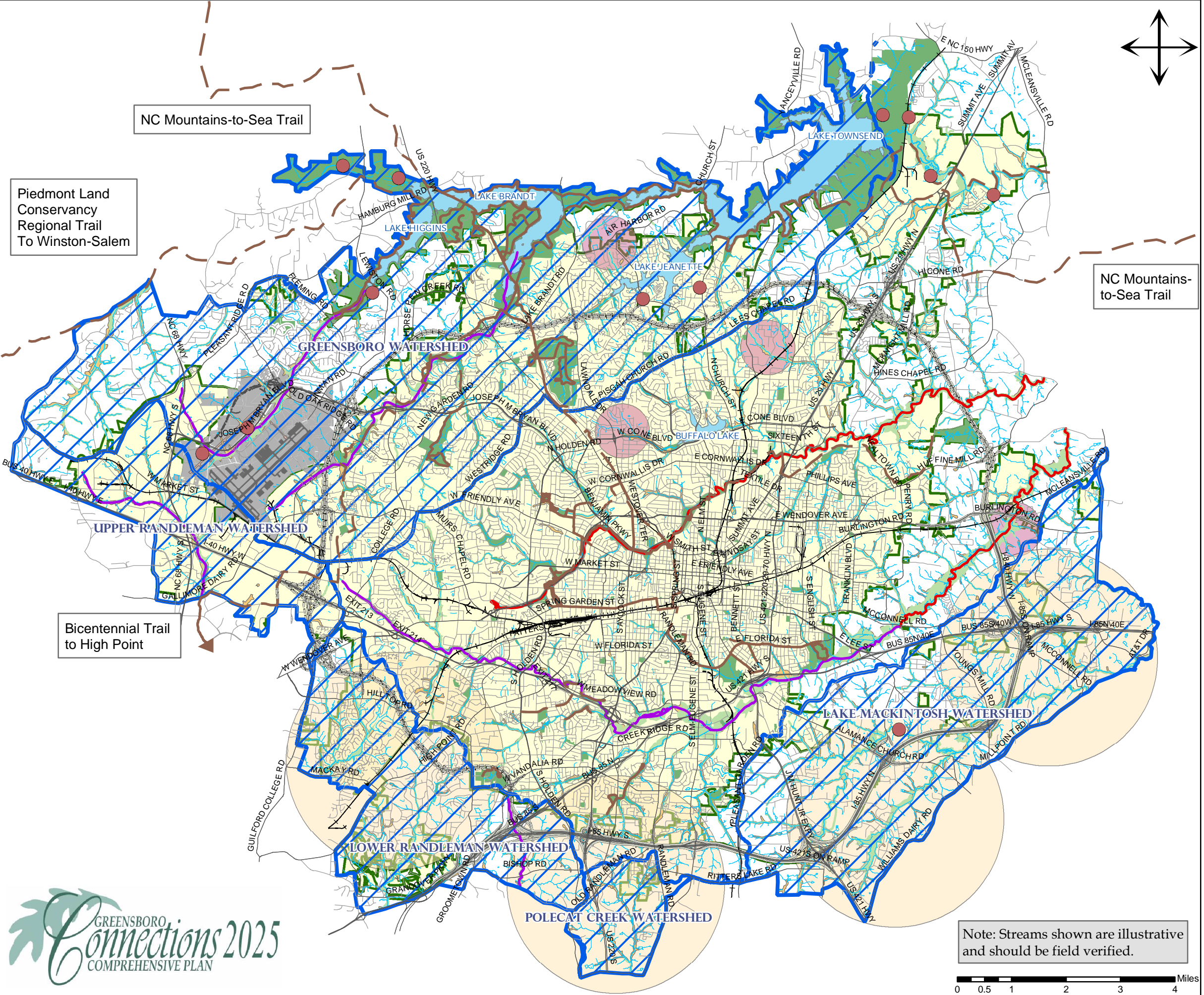
Narrative:

Like public buildings and spaces (Policy 5E.2), roadways are important to the image and identity of Greensboro. Policy 5F.4 speaks to the need for **coordinated design standards** for publicly and privately developed roadways in order to preserve and enhance visual right-of-way character. These standards should be sensitive to local contexts and resources (e.g., the established character of traditional urban neighborhoods or roadways in rural settings).



Figure 5-1
Plan Section 5.1

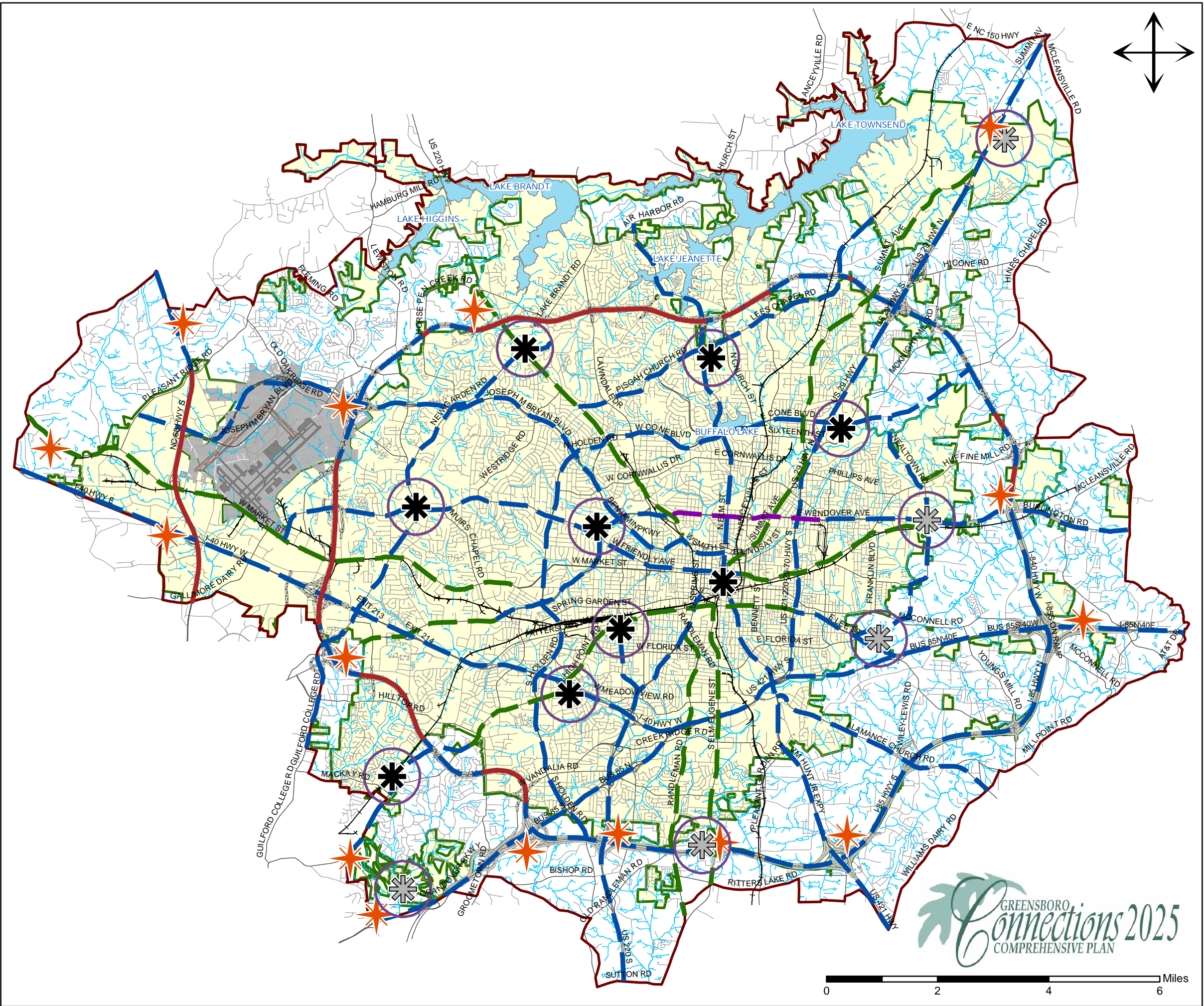
Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources



Adopted May 6, 2003

Figure 5-2
Plan Section 5.2

Community Structure



- Activity Center with 1/2 mile radius
- Proposed Activity Center with 1/2 mile radius
- Proposed Gateway
- Corridor Status/Type**
 - Existing Scenic Corridor
 - Proposed Scenic/Visual Corridor
 - Proposed Visual Enhancement Corridor
 - Proposed Scenic & Visual Enhancement Corridor

- Existing Urban Loop
- Future Urban Loop
- Water Sewer Boundary
- Airport Property
- Existing Runway
- Future Runway
- Proposed Bryan Blvd. Realignment
- Streams
- Railroad
- Lakes
- City of Greensboro

GREENSBORO
Connections 2025
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Figure 5-3
Plan Section 5.2

Listed Historic Resources

EXISTING DESIGNATIONS

National Register

- Properties
- Districts

County Regulated

- Landmark Properties

City Regulated

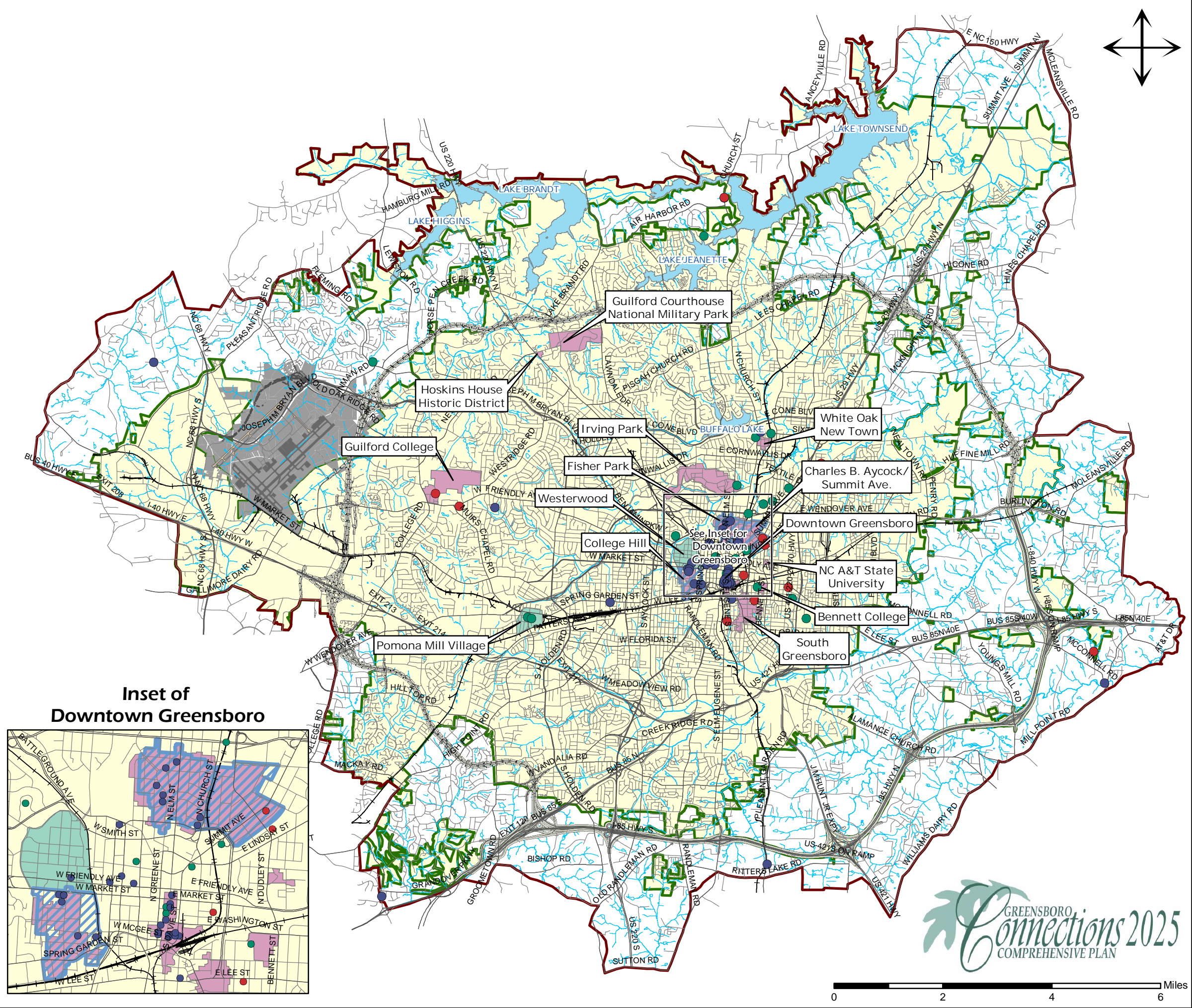
- ▨ Local Historic Districts

ELIGIBLE NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS (Study List)

- Properties
- Districts

- Existing Urban Loop
- - - Future Urban Loop
- ▭ Water Sewer Boundary
- Airport Property
- Existing Runway
- Future Runway
- - - Proposed Bryan Blvd. Realignment
- Railroad
- Streams
- Lakes
- City of Greensboro

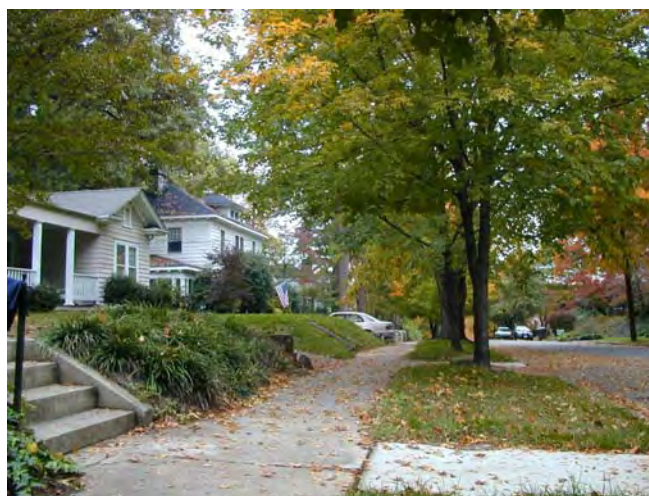
Note: The historic architecture inventories for Guilford County (1996) and Greensboro (1976 and 1989 update) are not included on this map.



6.0 HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

6.1 OVERVIEW

One broad area of consensus that emerged from the community input leading to the Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement was the desire to preserve and enhance Greensboro's quality of life and livability. Among the factors identified as key to achieving this goal is the need to ensure the stability and livability of neighborhoods throughout the City. Consistent with the principles articulated in the Vision Statement, livable neighborhoods should meet:



The basic needs of residents for a safe, clean environment; a varied stock of quality, affordable housing; and convenient access to community services, facilities, and amenities.

Although the City of Greensboro has a well established track record of over 20 years of neighborhood planning efforts, maintaining the standards of livability in existing neighborhoods and achieving them in new ones is becoming increasingly difficult (and increasingly critical) as the City continues to grow. As described in Section 3.1 (Current Trends) and the Land Use Element (Chapter 4.0), most new development is occurring away from “Urban Greensboro” in areas at the city/county fringe where vacant land is readily available. Further exacerbating this trend, many existing planning policies and regulations are perceived as favoring a continued pattern of sprawling, low-density development. As a result, some of the older commercial corridors and neighborhoods around the urban core are experiencing physical changes that could reduce their viability.

On the positive side, various City initiatives already in place seek to alter these trends in the directions set by the Vision Statement. The policies and strategies described in this element are designed to complement, support, and/or strengthen these initiatives and to facilitate their implementation.

6.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL

Meet the needs of present and future Greensboro citizens for a choice of decent, affordable housing in stable, livable neighborhoods that offer security, quality of life, and the necessary array of services and facilities.

POLICIES

6A. Implement a comprehensive neighborhood conservation and improvement program

6A.1 Using the recommendations of the *Neighborhood Planning and Service Delivery Report* as a foundation, implement a **Neighborhood Planning Initiative** to promote the conservation and enhancement of existing neighborhoods in a comprehensive, coordinated manner. Specific strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Developing and implementing an ongoing process for planning with and providing support services (e.g., transportation, police, and code enforcement) to neighborhoods
- Designating neighborhoods with an established character that is potentially threatened by change as "neighborhood conservation areas"
- Identifying and prioritizing infrastructure and public facility improvements
- Identifying infill development sites and compatible redevelopment opportunities that would strengthen existing neighborhoods
- Instituting regulatory changes and design standards to protect and enhance specific neighborhood character elements (e.g., special overlay districts)
- Encouraging neighborhood identity initiatives (e.g., neighborhood identification signage, community events, etc.)
- Other initiatives identified in the *Neighborhood Planning & Service Delivery Report*



Narrative:

The City's 1997 Strategic Plan called for the development and implementation of a **Neighborhood Planning Initiative**. As a first step, the *Neighborhood Planning and Service Delivery Report* (NPSD) was completed in 2000 by a team of employees representing a variety of City departments. One of the key findings of the report was that Greensboro has traditionally had a rather fragmented approach to dealing with neighborhoods, which has resulted in poor interagency coordination, duplication of efforts, and frustration and confusion on the part of citizens.

In addition to providing a comprehensive assessment of the City's current working relationship with neighborhoods, the NPSD identified the key requirements for establishing a successful program. A series of short- (24-month trial period) and long-term (5-year) actions were recommended to implement the proposed program. The short-term, recommended first-phase actions included:

- Reaching internal resolution (department heads and City Manager's office) on the optimum organizational structure, staff, and resources for the NPSD program
- Creating a "Neighborhood Advisory Committee" (NAC), to be responsible for, among other things, establishing the criteria and process for selecting neighborhoods to be planned
- Creating a "Neighborhood Planning Team," which will lead the neighborhood planning efforts
- Sponsoring a "Neighborhood Summit" to educate the public and officially launch the NPSD initiative
- Begin preparing a limited number of pilot or test neighborhood plans

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has successfully undertaken various neighborhood planning and development projects over the past twenty-plus years, including nine ongoing neighborhood work programs.¹ The City should continue to move towards the implementation of the comprehensive, coordinated approach outlined in the NPSD Report.

6A.2 Continue to support the application of HOPE VI program principles and other similar revitalization initiatives to reduce concentrations of poverty and promote **mixed-income neighborhoods**.

¹ These include Arlington Park, East Market Street, Eastside Park, Gorrell, Ole Asheboro, Phillips/Lombardy, Rosewood, Southside, and the new Willow Oaks community.

Narrative:

A key to the success of HOPE VI's synergistic approach is strong, effective partnerships between public and private entities that share a commitment to enhancing existing neighborhoods, encouraging economic development, and creating housing opportunities for households of all income levels. The City of Greensboro has limited experience with the promotion of mixed-income, mixed-use community revitalization. One recent example is the new **Willow Oaks mixed-income community** (formerly Morningside



*Proposed Streetscape for Willow Oaks Neighborhood
Courtesy of Duany Plater-Zyberg & Co. 2002*

Homes), currently underway in the southeast side of Greensboro. Over \$50 million was leveraged in commitments from the City, private investment, and other sources to augment a \$23 million HOPE VI grant awarded by HUD to the Greensboro Housing Authority for this initiative. The City has also played a key role in sponsoring the Southside development effort southeast of the downtown area. This traditionally designed, mixed-use revitalization project is demonstrating the viability of mixing a variety of housing and business uses.

Greensboro should continue to explore strategies, incentives, and opportunities for community revitalization. The City should also continue to encourage the active involvement of private developers and non-profit organizations in providing quality, compatible infill and/or rehabilitated housing in existing neighborhoods. Further, to promote active partnerships that contribute to the development of mixed-income communities of choice, the City should as an additional neighborhood revitalization tool foster the development of neighborhood-based organizations such as **community development corporations**. This type of organization creates opportunities for residents to be actively involved in making their own neighborhoods better places to live and work. This will require seed money, technical assistance, and a willingness to partner in new and creative ways.

6A.3 Create an ongoing **housing and neighborhood condition** monitoring strategy.

Narrative:

The City of Greensboro last conducted a housing condition survey over two decades ago. The need to establish a consistent, ongoing **monitoring strategy** to guide conservation, rehabilitation, and demolition efforts is underscored by the fact that approximately 55 percent of the housing stock in the City is now at least 40 years old. Further, the *2000-2004 Greensboro/ Guilford/High Point/Burlington/Alamance (GHPBA) Consolidated Plan for Housing Activities* (Consolidated Plan) indicates that, despite the relative success of the City's

rehabilitation programs, the amount of housing deemed unfit for habitation² continues to be a significant problem. Moreover, units categorized as unfit for habitation constitute a large share of the City's affordable housing stock. Some potential components of a housing condition monitoring program could include:

- Using the City's code enforcement program and GIS system to create and update, at agreed-upon intervals (e.g., 5 years), a database of information necessary to monitor housing conditions by neighborhood
- Conducting the citywide survey of housing conditions at intervals no greater than the established update of the City's Comprehensive Plan or Consolidated Plan. More detailed or frequent surveys may be conducted in specific areas as the need arises

While the implementation of a city-wide, periodic surveying and monitoring mechanism is likely to require the allocation of additional resources, short-term opportunities could be explored as a way to initiate the effort until such a mechanism becomes feasible. These opportunities could include grant-funded project collaborations with higher education institutions (e.g., UNCG, Greensboro College, and NCA&TSU), or with non-profit organizations (e.g., the Greensboro Housing Coalition and Housing Greensboro) to begin conducting **housing condition surveys** in select areas. Neighborhood associations should also be encouraged to participate in the surveying efforts and should be kept informed of the results and their impact in maintaining housing quality.

Housing condition is only one of a number of indicators of the health of neighborhoods that the City should consider in implementing a monitoring strategy. The City should pursue creating a **comprehensive indicators system** to track neighborhood and housing trends over time. Such a system would include, in addition to housing condition, indicators such as changes in property values, development activity, tenure, etc.

6A.4 Implement measures to protect Greensboro's **neighborhoods from potential negative impacts** of development, redevelopment, and/or public projects that are inconsistent with the neighborhoods' livability, architectural, or historical character, and reinvestment potential. Such measures could include, but need not be limited to:

- Supportive policy, zoning, and regulatory decisions, including protection against incompatible commercial encroachments into residential neighborhoods
- Review and modification of code provisions to address conflicts of use, scale, and intensity
- Review and modification of public facility and transportation policies and practices inconsistent with this objective

² Housing units deemed unfit for habitation are estimated to constitute about 5 percent of the total housing stock.

- Consideration of the potential impacts of public projects, or projects for which the City will accept public improvements, including consideration of alternative design submittals

Narrative:

The term **infill** refers to new development occurring on vacant or underutilized parcels located within areas that are otherwise developed and served by existing infrastructure. Infill development can add diversity and strengthen the vitality of a neighborhood. As described in the Land Use Policies for Reinvestment/Infill/Redevelopment (Section 4.4.1), the City of Greensboro advocates infill and redevelopment as a tool to achieve neighborhood revitalization, expand housing choices, and diminish pressure for greenfield development. Revitalization corridors and areas shown on the Growth Strategies Map (Figure 4-3) are priority locations for such forms of development. Nevertheless, it is important that revitalization objectives be balanced with the need for **neighborhood conservation**. Infill development is not inherently “good” simply because it is infill and may, in fact, adversely affect the fabric of a neighborhood if the project is not compatible with its context. Rather, the successful infill project is one that complements and supports the character and appearance of the neighborhood that surrounds it (see Land Use Policy 4A.1). Therefore, the intent of Policy 6A.4 is not to discourage infill projects, or to preclude a variety of land uses or building types within neighborhoods. Rather, these measures seek to ensure that infill projects meet standards of compatibility and quality that protect and support the integrity and character of established neighborhoods.



Vacant lot before infill



Rendering after infill

6B. Implement an expanded program to maintain the City’s housing stock, eliminate substandard housing, and meet needs for affordable housing

- 6B.1** Initiate a program to **reclaim or eliminate boarded up and/or long vacant units**, substandard housing, and blighting influences on neighborhoods, including encouraging owner occupancy as a way to promote home maintenance and rehabilitation



6B.2 Explore strategies to promote rehabilitation of historic houses and buildings whose contribution to neighborhood character may be compromised by inappropriate alterations or by deterioration, e.g.:

- Strategically targeting code enforcement efforts
- Making available a broader menu of rehabilitation options
- Creating streamlined procedures for negotiating with property owners who, deliberately or not, exercise “demolition by neglect” practices.



Narrative:

The systematic assessment of the condition of Greensboro's housing units, described in Policy 6A.3 above, will allow resources to be targeted to reduce the amount of substandard housing, discourage boarded-up buildings, and extend the life of the existing housing stock. Revitalization areas shown on the Growth Strategies Map (Figure 4-3) should be priority locations for such actions. It is equally important that housing programs be integrated into a strategy for assessing and improving the **overall health of neighborhoods** (see Policy 6A.1). One potential model for such a strategy is found in the City of Houston's "Neighborhoods to Standards" initiative, which among other things, was designed to "upgrade" neighborhoods by bringing in essential city services. Other potential approaches that could help to improve housing and neighborhood conditions include:



Before



After

- Continue to survey homeowners receiving housing rehabilitation assistance, after completion of the rehabilitation, to evaluate the quality of the work, and to determine satisfaction with the program
- Develop criteria for prioritizing demolition and/or rehabilitation assistance to areas where large concentrations of substandard housing units are found through housing condition surveys
- Aggressively pursue removal of abandoned vehicles and cleanup of accumulations of trash and debris in residential yards and on vacant lots

6B.3 Improve **maintenance of existing housing stock**, through the implementation of strategies such as:

- Strengthening minimum code standards to the maximum permitted by law
- Comprehensive and stringent minimum code enforcement efforts
- Education and support of tenants and landlords (particularly in relation to landlord/tenant laws as they govern the rental of residential property)
- Investigating the feasibility of implementing a rental unit certification and inspection program
- Expanding rental and owner rehabilitation programs

Narrative:

A variety of approaches, ranging from regulation and enforcement to financial assistance, can be used to help maintain existing housing stock in good condition. City code enforcement could be strengthened and made more proactive, which would require commitment of additional staff resources. More aggressive enforcement of existing statutes governing fines for violations could contribute funding for this effort. Education and outreach to landlords and tenants regarding their rights and responsibilities under the law would contribute to maintaining rental housing stock in good condition. Housing rehabilitation programs also have an important role to play in maintaining and improving Greensboro's existing housing stock (see Policies 6B.1 and 2).

One approach that is not currently used in Greensboro is **rental unit certification for units with a history of substandard code violations**. When used in conjunction with an inspections program, this approach is an effective means of encouraging responsible management, ensuring maintenance and proper use of rental units, preventing deterioration of the units, assuring renters that licensed rental units meet minimum housing standards, and protecting landlords from unfounded claims by renters. Certification requirements could also help protect the character and stability of neighborhoods where conversion of single-family homes to rental housing is a possibility. One drawback of such programs is the need for significant commitment of staff resources by the City to conduct the inspections. While immediate implementation of rental licensing and inspections is not recommended, the City should explore the experience of communities such as Mankato, MN, Elgin, IL, and Ocean City and Cumberland, MD that operate successful programs as possible models.

6B.4 Establish a mechanism to create, maintain, and **provide information on rental and “for sale units”** affordable to those earning 80% or less of the median income

Narrative:

In the fourth quarter of 2000, the Housing Opportunity Index (HOI)³ for the Greensboro/Winston-Salem/High Point metro area was approximately 73 percent (*City of Greensboro City Data Book*, August 2001, Table 6-11). The HOI is computed by the National Association of HomeBuilders. The same local source information used to calculate this index could serve as a starting point for constructing a citywide **database of available affordable housing units**. In addition, if adopted, the rental unit licensing program described in Policy 6B.3 could also contribute key information concerning the stock of rental housing units.

The City of Greensboro will continue to take a leadership role in promoting a diversity of housing resources and in disseminating information about them through ongoing buyer education and similar programs. In addition, the City will work with the Greensboro Housing Authority, non-profit, and private affordable housing providers to assemble and organize this information in a manner that is readily and widely available to those households that can most benefit from it.

6B.5 Increase initiatives to address the needs of **citizens most in need of housing and support services**, including the homeless, near homeless, low-income rental dwellers, and special populations. Efforts should address the need for expanded shelter options, transitional housing, assistance for families and individuals threatened with homelessness, and supportive services.

6B.6 Increase existing **dedicated funding sources** for expanded housing programs

Narrative:

During the past 12 years, Greensboro has generated a large supply of low-cost homes by providing land and financing to nonprofit housing developers, including Habitat for Humanity, Homeowners Model Experiment, Project Homestead, Gate City Community Development Corporation, and other private development groups. As a result of the high share of new homes for sale under \$80,000 (21.4 percent in 1999, according to the *Consolidated Plan*), Greensboro's HOI compares



³ The HOI represents the percentage of homes that was affordable by households earning the area's 2000 median family income of \$51,000.

favorably to those achieved by other Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) in the Triad Region, as well as in the South Region in general.⁴

The City's supply of affordable rental units, resulting from collaborations with both non-profit and for profit entities, is also strong, although fewer local resources have been channeled to this market segment. Despite these efforts however, the average apartment rental rates in Greensboro continue to be somewhat higher than those for comparable units in other municipalities in the Triad Region.

The City's Nussbaum Housing Partnership Revolving Fund has been key to Greensboro's success as a co-producer of affordable housing. This fund currently earmarks one cent of the City's tax rate for housing. To meet the ongoing affordable housing needs in the community, **additional funding sources** must be identified to further expand the resources and mechanisms available to the development community. These non-traditional funding sources could include secondary market lenders, foundations and other philanthropic organizations, and a variety of bonding sources.

6C. Promote the diversification of new housing stock to meet the needs of all citizens for suitable, affordable housing

6C.1 Apply **flexible, variable density bonuses** for the incorporation of housing of various types and price ranges in suitable locations:

- Potential transit corridors
- Mixed-use centers
- Pedestrian-oriented developments
- Housing for special populations (student housing near campus)
- Affordable housing



6C.2 Revise residential districts to encourage **mixed housing types** within developments (single-family, townhouses, multi-family; products such as accessory apartments, live/work units). Consolidate and simplify zoning districts to allow a range of housing types.



⁴ The South Region comprises 61 MSAs including all or portions of the states of AL, AR, DE, DC, FL, GA, IN, KY, MA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, and WV.

6C.3 Consider ways to provide more affordable housing in large-scale developments. Possible approaches include, but are not limited to:

- Incentive provisions (i.e., density bonuses for provision of affordable units)
- Specification of a maximum size for a percentage of the units
- Large-scale developments with housing mixes that include more affordable types (e.g., apartments, townhouses)



Narrative:

Gradual changes in the demographic and socioeconomic makeup of Greensboro's population, as well as the corresponding changes in housing needs, highlight the importance of encouraging **diversity** in the production of **new housing**. To achieve the objective of compact, cost-efficient housing developments at locations appropriate to accommodate diverse groups, some barriers remain to be removed. Large parts of Greensboro are currently zoned at relatively low density. Rezoning of large tracts to higher density often generates public opposition. Communities across the country have addressed this problem through options ranging from modified zoning and development standards that provide density incentives and/or flexible land use mixes, to disincentives for suburban, greenfield development.

While Greensboro has had reasonable success in providing a broad range of housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households, a shortage of available, appropriately zoned land is driving housing prices up. Private builders have also moved upmarket. Current market trends indicate a steady upward shift in house sales prices that is making it more difficult for **middle income households** in particular to be able to buy a home. According to the *Consolidated Plan*, as of 1999 the percentage of sales above \$200,000 was 38.1 percent, up from 33 percent in 1998, 30 percent in 1997, and 28.5 percent in 1996. From 1998 to 1999 the median sale price of a new home increased by nearly \$15,000 or 10.6 percent. A similar appreciation is evident in median resale home prices, which increased 33 percent between 1996 and 1999.

In addition to affordability issues, there is increasing demand for housing to accommodate persons (empty nesters, the elderly, young single professionals, etc.) that do not meet the traditional household profile of a family with children. A variety of regulatory approaches should be explored to meet these needs, beginning with regulatory changes to encourage a **mixing of housing types and sizes** within new developments. A large-scale development,

for example, could include separate areas for single-family lots, townhouses, and multi-family units.



Mixed housing types in Reedy Fork Development

Regulatory approaches to diversifying the housing mix should be based upon incentives or other forms of tradeoffs. For example, some communities in North Carolina have limits on the size of a certain percentage of the units in developments in certain districts to make them affordable and suitable for smaller households. This approach might be explored for application in Greensboro in conjunction with offsetting density incentives.

7.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

7.1 OVERVIEW

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, economic development was identified as critically important to Greensboro's future. An entire section of the Vision Statement addresses "Economic Prosperity," envisioning a diverse new economy with business and employment opportunities for all, a balanced development pattern serving the entire City, a business-friendly environment, and a strong tax base.

Published in November 2000 under the sponsorship of several local foundations, the "McKinsey Report" provided an assessment of the current state of and prospects for Greensboro's economy. The major conclusions of this study were:

- ***Economic evaluation:*** Greensboro currently ranks slightly above average among its peers in the Southeast.
- ***Economic forecast:*** An undirected, "business-as-usual" approach will likely lead to gradual erosion of the community's overall prosperity and an increasing performance gap with the rest of the state.
- ***Discussion agenda:*** Greensboro would benefit from collectively agreeing on and pursuing a more focused development agenda.

The report found that there has been a fundamental shift in the economy from higher paying manufacturing to lower paying service jobs and that projected economic trends point to a continued "downward shift" of the City's economic standing over the next few years. Clearly, significant "course corrections" are needed if Greensboro is to move in the direction of the Vision Statement.

Currently, the formally designated resources committed by the City to internal economic development activities include the (one-person) Office of Business Assistance and Development, Training & Employment Services, and the Minority & Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) program. Other city departments with an important role to play in economic development include Planning, Water Resources, and Transportation. Planning influences how and where development occurs through its current and long-range planning activities while Water Resources (sewer and water) and Transportation (roads) provide infrastructure necessary to support such development. In addition, the City contributes

funding to support a Council approved incentive policy as well as economic development activities of other organizations.

Given the need to proactively address issues related to Greensboro's economy and the number of local and regional agencies and organizations with economic development as their primary mission, the major challenges facing the City are to:

- Define its appropriate role in the economic development arena
- Identify the specific strategies it will pursue to promote employment, growth in per capita income and the tax base, and other economic development objectives set by the Vision Statement

These challenges are the focus of the economic development element. It should be noted that economic development should not be viewed in isolation, but rather as a **fundamental principle** that is reflected in **all elements** of the Comprehensive Plan. Thus the policies set forth in this element are meant to work in combination with other plan policies to achieve the City's economic development objectives. For example, Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Policies 9A.1 to 4 for the extension of sewer and water infrastructure are important to support certain desired types of economic investments. Similarly, Land Use Policies 4A.1 to 3 and 4B.1 to 3 to promote reinvestment, infill, and redevelopment in urban areas are key to supporting economic development objectives such as increasing economic opportunity and achieving a more balanced development pattern. In another example, Community Character Policies 5A.1 to 4, which propose establishment of an expanded network of parks and greenways, support Greensboro's reputation for livability, one of the strengths on which economic development efforts can build.

7.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL

Promote a healthy, diversified economy with a strong tax base and opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship and for-profit and non-profit economic development for all segments of the community, including under-served areas such as East Greensboro

POLICIES

7A. Target city investment and regulatory policies for economic development

7A.1 Define the **economic development objectives and related strategies** of the City of Greensboro.

7A.2 Encourage **“home-grown” and community-based businesses and entrepreneurs**, with a special emphasis on increasing the number of minority-owned businesses and economic opportunities in traditionally under-served parts of the community.

7A.3 Increase the level of resources committed by the City to achieving its **economic development objectives**, including:



- Increased staffing and a higher level of authority for the City’s economic development function
- Focus increased City attention on minority business development opportunities by assigning a senior economic staff person reporting directly to the City Manager as a liaison to the Greensboro Minority Business Development Council [See Economic Development Policy 7D.4]
- Increase funding levels, including establishment of an Economic Development Investment Fund for priority economic development projects that require a financial boost to “get them over the finish line,” with periodic review of this commitment by City Council

Narrative:

The first step in initiating a proactive approach to achieving a healthy, sustainable economy is to define the City’s overall **mission and objectives** related to economic development. This mission should not seek to duplicate the work of other economic development entities, but rather focus on those programs and initiatives that the City is best equipped to address and which implement its defined economic development objectives. Key areas include:

- Promoting local entrepreneurs and **small business development**, emphasizing minority communities and areas such as East Greensboro that have not had equal access to economic opportunity
- **Targeting city actions** such as water/sewer extensions (see Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Policies 9A.1 to 4 and Land Use “Growth at the Fringe” Policies 4F.1 to 5) or funding/incentives to help make specific projects happen (e.g.,

a new research/employment park in a targeted growth area or a grocery store in East Greensboro)

The new mission statement and objectives will provide direction for increased commitment of city resources to economic development issues. These commitments should include:

- Increasing the number and profile of **economic development staff** above currently authorized levels
- Establishing an **Economic Development Investment Fund (EDIF)** to supplement the City's incentive program. The purpose of the EDIF would be to provide a competitive advantage on priority projects that meet the City's economic development objectives, but which require an extra financial incentive to make them happen. The fund could be used for such purposes as buying down land costs, lease costs, tenant improvements, etc. Criteria should be established for the return in terms of tax revenues, jobs, or other economic benefits to be generated by the project.

Other city funding should be coordinated with funding provided by other agencies for economic development activities in Greensboro. Examples include Forward Greensboro's Venture Capital Fund, the State of North Carolina's Development Zone and Brownfields programs, and Action Greensboro initiatives for the Downtown. These efforts should target opportunities to address the City's defined Economic Development mission and objectives.

7A.4 Based upon the City's economic development objectives, provide **incentives** to support **priority economic development projects**, for example:

- Extensions of city infrastructure
- More flexible code requirements for desirable infill projects, such as parking and building setbacks that match the local context
- Expedited development review and approval processes
- Consistent with North Carolina law, loans, tax abatements, and fee waivers (e.g., annexation agreements that defer actual annexation and the requirement to pay city taxes for a period of years)
- Reasonable, business-friendly interpretations of the Development Ordinance to avoid hindering projects

Narrative:

Incentives are one of the most powerful economic development tools available to the City and can be made even more useful by directing them to support the mission and objectives defined per Policy 7A.1. As noted, a variety of incentives should be used, including:

- Extension of **physical infrastructure** (water, sewer, roads) for key projects that help implement the City's economic development objectives (see Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Policies 9A.1 to 4 and Land Use "Growth at the Fringe" Policies 4F.1 to 5)
- Modification to **development regulations** to facilitate desired types of development (e.g., adaptive reuse of historic development or infill development that may be constrained by inappropriate code provisions; see Land Use Policy 4A.2)
- Direct **financial incentives** (e.g., use of the proposed Economic Development Investment Fund)

7A.5 Revise the City's **incentive guidelines** so that they are consistent with the new economic development objectives.

In revising and applying the incentive guidelines the City should consider both projects/locations that do not currently qualify (e.g., aviation maintenance businesses in the airport tax exempt zone) and others that may currently qualify but which would not meet the new guidelines.

7A.6 Enact regulatory changes to make it easier to **start and operate small businesses** (e.g., live-work units, review current home occupation ordinance).

Narrative:

One way to facilitate entrepreneurial activity is to establish regulations that allow persons to operate small businesses out of their homes.

Live-work units (which combine living accommodations with space for business activities) are one technique that has been successfully used in urban settings; mixed-use zoning districts should accommodate this kind of activity. In addition, the City's existing **home occupation regulations** should be reviewed for opportunities for persons to operate small businesses out of their homes. Changes to the home occupation regulations should include standards to protect public health and safety, neighborhood character, and adjacent properties where necessary.



Southside live-work unit

7B. Promote a customer-friendly environment within city government related to economic development

- 7B.1** Through the Office of Business Assistance & Development and Planning Department continue to provide **assistance to individuals and businesses** who approach the City on economic development matters, for example:
- Information and resources on economic development issues (e.g., available incentive programs)
 - Assistance in navigating city permitting and approval processes
 - Referrals to agencies that can provide more in-depth assistance and resources on particular issues (e.g., starting a small business)
 - Creation of market packages providing relevant development and demographic data and maps
- 7B.2** Create an **appeals process** to the Department Head and City Manager for the resolution of permitting issues within a short timeframe.
- 7B.3** Through a top-down commitment beginning with public endorsement by City Council, adopt results-oriented **economic development as part of the mission statement** of city government. Make all city departments aware of the importance of their activities to achieving the City's economic development goals.

Narrative:

The Vision Statement identifies a **business-friendly, welcoming** environment as key to Greensboro's economic future. Towards this end, facilitating economic development should be an integral part of the mission statement of city government that is implemented through the programs and day-to-day activities of all departments. The current function of the Office of Business Assistance & Development as an **"ombudsman"** to assist persons on economic development matters should be continued and expanded and all department heads should be encouraged to be supportive as the City commits additional resources to economic development (Policy 7A.3). City policies and procedures should focus on **streamlining** desirable economic development projects to the greatest extent possible through measures such as provision for expedited appeals of unfavorable staff decisions.

7C. Ensure that city land use policies and regulations allow for an adequate supply of land to accommodate economic development

- 7C.1** Ensure that **adequate land is zoned and has infrastructure available** for the various stages of business development (sites for small business start-ups/incubators, existing businesses needing to expand, larger businesses seeking to locate in Greensboro, etc.).

7C.2 Develop and maintain an **inventory of available economic development sites**, ranging from infill opportunities to sites suitable for corporate/research park development.

Narrative:

Adjusting the City's **zoning and development regulations** will be one of the priority implementing actions of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to ensuring that sufficient zoned land is available to accommodate future demand, the City's development regulations should be revised where necessary to accommodate current economic uses (e.g., "flex-office," research & development) and eliminate obsolete ones. **Land use and infrastructure** programs should be coordinated to ensure that the needs of economic development sites for water, sewer, and adequate road access are met by existing infrastructure or that the infrastructure can be easily extended. Finally, current information on **available sites** should be developed, maintained, and made available by the City and local economic development agencies to businesses interested in locating or expanding their operations in Greensboro. Commercial/industrial real estate brokers should be involved in this effort.

7C.3 Identify **brownfield sites and underutilized/abandoned properties and buildings**, pursue funding, and expedite opportunities for development. [see also Land Use Policies 4D.1 to 6]

Narrative:

Encouraging **reuse and redevelopment** of previously developed properties and buildings that are no longer economically viable for their intended uses is an important Comprehensive Plan strategy (see Land Use Section 4.3.1, Reinvestment/Infill/ Redevelopment). One key action is to remove **unintended impediments** to reuse and redevelopment of these properties caused by regulatory and other policies (see Land Use Policy 4A.2). In addition, many of these properties (referred to as **brownfields**) have the added complication of the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance or contaminants generated by previous uses. Programs at the federal and state levels are available to expedite development of these properties by providing funds for site assessment and cleanup and limiting liability for landowners and developers not responsible for the original contamination. The City should encourage the use of such programs to stimulate redevelopment of brownfields in areas such as the Downtown and older industrial zones.



7C.4 Explore the feasibility of establishing a **technology development zone**.

Narrative:

A “**technology development zone**” is an area designated to support the development of a concentration of research/technology facilities and businesses. Establishment of such a zone in Greensboro would involve designation of a suitable location(s) in which, through a partnership between the City and other economic development agencies, policies and programs such as zoning, infrastructure, provision of economic development incentives, and marketing would be targeted to attract high-tech facilities and businesses. This initiative is consistent with the Greensboro and Guilford County Cluster Analysis prepared for Forward Greensboro, which identifies **industry clusters** for targeting as part of city and county economic development programs. Communications services and software were identified as one of the potential industry clusters.

7C.5 Assure the above efforts include sites in **East Greensboro** and other under-served areas that could benefit from economic development.

Narrative:

The City’s economic development activities will need to address both areas designated for growth at the city/county fringe and reinvestment in urban areas within the present city limits. A key principle of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote economic development in historically under-served parts of the City such as **East Greensboro**. Properties in these areas should receive priority consideration as the City designates and promotes land for economic development. The NCA&TSU Farm site is one such candidate.

7D. Build partnerships with other entities on economic development issues

7D.1 Continue to provide funding to **agencies/organizations** involved in promoting economic development in the City. Work with these agencies to set specific goals to address the City’s economic development objectives (e.g., increasing community-based businesses).



7D.2 Continue and expand the City’s role as a **catalyst in facilitating priority economic development projects** to achieve its economic development objectives.

7D.3 Promote economic development through **public/private partnerships** to include government, economic development agencies, educational and health care institutions, and businesses. Build on existing partnerships and initiatives in this effort. Examples include:

- Adult education/worker training (building on current efforts by Training & Employment, programs offered by GTCC, etc.)
- Small business development (building on current efforts by the Office of Business Assistance & Development, MWBE, Main Library, and non-city organizations)
- University-related research and development opportunities with UNCG and NCA&TSU (building on the example of the Nussbaum Center incubator facility)
- Work with NCA&TSU to establish a research park on the A&T farm property
- Retention of young persons (college graduates) in the community (e.g., sponsoring job matching and career placement programs to make young persons aware of the opportunities; enhancing downtown Greensboro's role as a cultural/entertainment center of the community)



Narrative:

Continuing and expanding **partnerships** among governmental agencies, economic development organizations, and private sector businesses is essential to achieving the economic development objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The City currently provides funding to organizations involved in economic and community development. The City should continue this funding and work with the organizations to ensure that its application supports the economic development objectives defined per Policy 7A.1. It will be important in each partnership initiative to define the specific role the City will play to promote economic development. This role may include, for example, making sure adequate zoning and infrastructure is in place, expediting the review and approval process, or providing financial incentives.

7D.4 Establish a senior economic staff position reporting directly to the City Manager to work with private businesses, foundations, and universities to establish a **Greensboro Minority Business Development Council** dedicated to increasing access and opportunity for minority entrepreneurs through services such as:

- Facilitating access to affordable capital
- Providing technical and management assistance
- Matching minority businesses with private and public-sector purchasers of goods and services
- Promoting networking opportunities
- Preparing marketing and promotional packages
- [See Economic Development Policy 7A.3]



Narrative:

A number of communities around the nation have established minority business development councils to address issues of business access and economic parity for the minority community. The mission of such an organization in Greensboro would be to foster **community-based economic development** by promoting business opportunities for minority entrepreneurs and firms with public agencies and private sector corporations. Acting as a catalyst in establishing and developing the capabilities of such an organization should be a priority of the City's enhanced economic development program.

7D.5 Support programs by the Greensboro Department of Transportation and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation to **connect workers to jobs** (e.g., better road networks and transit service to link areas such as East Greensboro with employment centers).



Narrative:

Viable transportation is a key ingredient in providing employment opportunities for persons who have not previously participated fully in Greensboro's economy. **Transportation programs** initiated by the public sector or through public/private partnerships can help to match job seekers with positions that need to be filled, benefiting workers and employers alike. An example is the shuttle service provided by Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) in the area of the Piedmont Triad International Airport. This service connects workers arriving at PART's regional express bus hub to businesses located in the Airport vicinity (see Transportation Policy 8C.1).

8.0 TRANSPORTATION

8.1 OVERVIEW

The Vision Statement identifies as a component of Sustainable Growth the need for a “**functional, well integrated transportation system** that provides connections and choices for citizens to move about Greensboro and the Triad, including convenient bus and light rail linkages.” The following principles are key to this vision of Greensboro’s future transportation system:

- A **balance among different modes of travel**, including interconnected pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and routes in addition to roadways
- **Integrated development patterns and transportation networks** that work together to support objectives such as mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities and use of alternative travel modes
- The **equitable distribution of transportation facilities and choices** throughout the community, including attention to areas with less well-developed infrastructure and to connecting workers to employment centers



Typical of cities of similar size throughout the nation, Greensboro’s present transportation system is dominated by the automobile. Greensboro residents drive alone at a higher level and use public transportation at a much lower level than the nation as a whole (albeit at a rate higher than the North Carolina average). While the City has a relatively well-developed roadway network with a major beltway (the Urban Loop) under construction, traffic congestion is a quality of life issue for residents. Current development trends indicate increasing automobile dependency in the future. According to what now appear to be conservative projections made by the Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in 2001, area population would increase 42%, vehicle miles traveled 80%, and congestion 65% between 1994 and 2025.¹ Unless altered by decisive public action, these development trends will move the City in the direction of an accelerated program of costly

¹ 2025 Greensboro Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, August 2001

road widenings that will increase the tax rate, impact properties along existing thoroughfares, and still not keep pace with congestion.

Several agencies are working to address transportation issues in Greensboro and the surrounding area, including the Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of Greensboro Department of Transportation (GDOT), Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). GDOT is the lead transportation planning agency for the Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), whose member agencies include the City of Greensboro, Guilford County, and NCDOT. As the agency responsible for managing traffic, operations, public parking, public transportation, and transportation planning within the City, GDOT will have the most direct role to play in implementing the transportation policies presented in this element. These policies build upon current transportation initiatives while linking to and supporting other Comprehensive Plan goals and policies for topics such as land use, community character, and economic development.

8.2 GOAL AND POLICIES

GOAL

Develop and maintain a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system that provides convenient choices for accessing destinations throughout Greensboro and the Triad, including a range of well-integrated transit, pedestrian, and bicycle linkages

POLICIES

8A. Maintain a roadway network that safely and efficiently accommodates vehicular traffic while supporting other community objectives defined in the Comprehensive Plan

- 8A.1** Continue a thorough, comprehensive maintenance program as a top priority in acquiring and allocating funds, ensuring the preservation of infrastructure investments.
- 8A.2** Maximize the capacity of existing roadways before increasing capacity via new construction.

- 8A.3** Invest in road improvements (widening and new roads) when necessary and appropriate to address safety or capacity deficiencies (both existing and future), primarily by eliminating critical bottlenecks and gaps in the road network.

Narrative:

Policies 8A.1 to 3 are intended to maximize the efficiency and connectivity of the existing road network as opposed to investment in extensive, costly roadway widening and new construction projects. This philosophy is reflected in the \$73.75 million bond package for transportation improvements passed by the citizens of Greensboro in November 2000. To be spent over a ten-year period, the bond package includes \$51.5 million for roadway improvements. These improvements emphasize strategic enhancements (targeted widening, medians, turn lanes, etc.) and extensions of existing streets to address specific deficiencies or needs for connectivity in the road network.

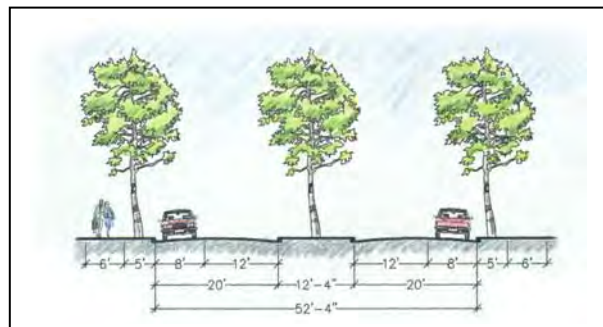
- 8A.4** Develop a strategic investment plan to create better **road networks in under-served and under-connected areas** of the City, giving priority to connections that will stimulate economic development and which support land use plans and environmental goals.

Narrative:

One of the primary criteria in strategically targeting roadway improvement projects should be to provide better access for areas such as **East Greensboro**, which historically has had a less well developed road network than other parts of the City. An example included in the City's capital program for roadway improvements is the extension of Florida Street. This future roadway will provide better access to the NC A&T farm property, which is identified for development as a research park by Economic Development Policy 7D.3. Another example is the extension of Cone Boulevard to the future Urban Loop at Hines Chapel Road. This roadway will improve access to the northeast Greensboro area and the City should encourage an interchange to be developed where it intersects the Urban Loop.

- 8A.5** In certain critical corridors or areas, **modify level-of-service expectations** to accept certain levels of congestion where warranted by community needs. This may include constraining ultimate roadway widths and the maximum number of lanes.

- 8A.6** Consider more **flexible, context-sensitive geometric design standards** for roadway alignments and cross-sections, where appropriate (i.e., where demonstrable benefits are not offset by negative safety or economic impacts). Examples include:



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- Reduced design speeds
- Narrower lane widths
- Provisions for on-street parking
- Planted medians and roadside landscaping
- Tighter curve radii
- Traffic-calming techniques

Narrative:

Policies 8A.5 and 6 address the importance of taking the **local community context** into consideration in the planning and design of roadway improvement projects. Limits on roadway width and number of lanes may be warranted in environmentally sensitive areas, historic districts, established neighborhoods or business districts, pedestrian activity zones, or designated transit corridors. In addition, limits on roadway improvements may be appropriate to discourage development in certain areas that are not targeted for growth by the Comprehensive Plan.

An emerging approach in the transportation field referred to as **context-sensitive design** emphasizes collaborative planning with stakeholders to develop improvements that preserve scenic, historic, and environmental values while maintaining connectivity, safety, and mobility (as opposed to “one-size-fits-all” engineering solutions). This approach lends itself to application in many parts of Greensboro. The planned enhancements to East Market Street, which incorporate medians, turn lanes, and traffic calming measures rather than emphasizing increased capacity for automobiles, are an example. The City’s roadway engineering standards should also be reviewed for additional opportunities to develop more flexible applications appropriate to local contexts (see Policy 8F.1).

8A.7 Support the implementation of the adopted **Thoroughfare Plan.*****Narrative:***

The **Thoroughfare Plan** defines the system of major roadways (freeways, major thoroughfares, and minor thoroughfares) needed to support future land use and population in the City. The last major update to this plan was completed in 1989, with several additional revisions made during the 1990s. The Thoroughfare Plan is currently being updated, with adoption anticipated in early 2003. Figure 8-1 illustrates Greensboro’s existing and future thoroughfare network based upon the currently adopted Thoroughfare Plan (existing and proposed freeways and thoroughfares shown on the map) and the update that is in process (conceptual new major and minor thoroughfares). Dates shown for the completion of segments of the Urban Loop are based upon the most current projections by NCDOT. Figure 8-1 also illustrates several potential road improvement projects that are in the

planning stages, including High Point Road, interchanges on US 29 between the Urban Loop and Reedy Fork, and conceptual new thoroughfares west of the Airport.

Once the Thoroughfare Plan is updated and adopted, implementation of the plan will involve identifying and programming key projects for construction in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program and the City Capital Improvements Program.

8A.8 Develop a **Collector Street Plan** to determine effective ways to plan for future collector street connections and **enhanced connectivity** of the local street system.

Narrative:

Intermediate in function between thoroughfares and local streets, **collectors** distribute trips from and channel trips to thoroughfares and provide access and circulation within and between neighborhoods. A well-developed collector street system provides **connectivity** and **choices** for drivers, thus alleviating congestion on larger thoroughfares. The City does not currently have a Collector Street Plan, although some of the larger collectors are shown on the Thoroughfare Plan. Concurrent with updating the Thoroughfare Plan, a plan should be developed to identify Greensboro's network of existing and future collector streets. New collector streets may be "retrofitted" in areas of existing development (e.g., by connecting stub streets between subdivisions) or incorporated into development plans as vacant properties are developed. The need for collector streets may be reduced by the application of interconnected/grid street patterns in new developments in lieu of extensive cul-de-sacs.



8A.9 Consider moving construction of the **northern portion of the Urban Loop** up in priority so as to connect East Greensboro to the Airport area employment center.



A well-connected street system reduces congestion.

Narrative:

The northern portion of the Urban Loop was originally planned to be the last segment to be implemented. However, NCDOT has moved the project up on its priority list and has programmed it for construction. The City should work with NCDOT to ensure that this segment is completed as soon as possible.

8A.10 Stimulate economic growth by pursuing priority funding to **upgrade the US29 interchanges** between the Urban Loop and Reedy Fork.

Narrative:

While this project is not currently funded in the Greensboro Urban Area MPO 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan, it has been identified by the MPO as a priority and a feasibility study has been completed. The MPO should program and identify funding for upgrading the US 29 interchanges in the next update to the Long Range Transportation Plan, in coordination with the update to the City's Thoroughfare Plan.

8A.11 Maintain and expand current **traffic management programs**, to maximize the safety and efficiency of the existing infrastructure. Examples include:

- Up-to-date signal timing plans, vehicle detection hardware, and coordinated signal systems through GDOT's Corridor Optimization Program
- Real-time information on travel conditions, provided to the public via remote video sensing and broadcast on Channel 13 and the Internet
- Comprehensive safety and congestion management programs that collect and evaluate data on an annual basis, and which provide prioritized recommendations

8A.12 Continue promoting and expanding an active **transportation demand management program**, thereby reducing demand for new capacity (helping preserve existing infrastructure) and reducing the rate of growth of area vehicle miles traveled, congestion, and pollutant emissions. This should include consideration of:

- Employee trip reduction targets in congested areas, with appropriate incentives
- Transportation management organizations to promote and coordinate ridesharing, transit use, etc.
- Incentives for increased use of telecommuting and flexible work hours
- Incentives and employer subsidies to encourage employee transit use, including use of the Corporate Connections program
- Public education and awareness programs regarding the availability and benefits of alternatives to automobile commuting

Narrative:

Policies 8A-11 and 12 address the need for a broad-based strategy to limit congestion within the City through strategies to manage traffic flows (traffic management) and to reduce the number of persons driving alone during peak hours (transportation demand management). Current **traffic management** initiatives include roadway corridor optimization and signalization plans, use of the Internet and local cable access to provide information on

traffic conditions, and intersection safety and congestion evaluations. These programs should be continued and expanded.

Current **transportation demand management** initiatives include a van pooling program administered by PART and partially supported by City of Greensboro funds, as well as Corporate Connections, which provides tax credits for employees who utilize transit. The City should work with PART to more aggressively promote transportation demand management at a regional level, including increased use of the existing programs, initiation of new programs, and outreach to corporations and other major employers. The City should also continue and expand internal programs to encourage city employees to use alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles (car-pooling, transit, etc.) in order to further take an active role in promoting transportation demand management in the community.

8A.13 Continue and enhance existing **traffic calming programs** and investigate new ways to manage vehicle speed, volumes, and safety in and around sensitive areas (neighborhoods, schools, parks, etc.).

Narrative:

Traffic calming refers to physical or operational measures to reduce vehicular speeds or volumes of traffic, especially on local streets and with respect to trips with origins and destinations outside the neighborhood. In general, it is the design of the roadway itself, not the posted travel speed or the presence or absence of police patrols, that determines the driving speed thereon. A variety of traffic calming techniques have been used in Greensboro, most notably the three way stop and neighborhood speed watch programs. Examples of other traffic calming techniques include traffic circles or roundabouts, textured pavements, raised crosswalks, on-street parking, and mid-block street narrowings or “chokers” (often in conjunction with pedestrian crossings). The use of traffic calming in the City should be expanded and applied in a more comprehensive manner on existing streets, street extensions, and new streets. Small area and neighborhood plans can be used to identify specific opportunities for applying this approach.



Roundabout – Hilton Head, SC

8B. Develop comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle facility networks

8B.1 Ensure adequate funding for construction and maintenance of **bicycle facilities, sidewalks, and trails** as critical components of the transportation



system. Leverage state and federal grant funds to supplement city resources wherever possible. Ensure close coordination between Transportation and Parks and Recreation plans.

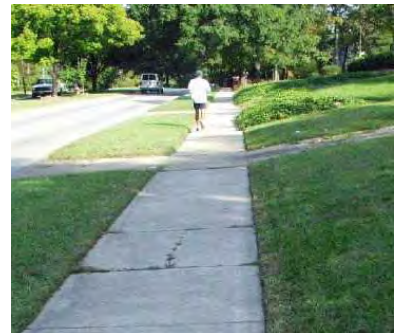
8B.2 Support and apply policies to promote walkability and bicycling including the prioritization of city-funded **pedestrian and bicycle improvements and modifications of development standards.**

8B.3 Continue coordination of pedestrian and bicycle improvements with **roadway and transit plans and projects.**

Narrative:

A multi-faceted strategy should be used to develop a **comprehensive network** of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including:

- Sidewalks and bike facility enhancements along streets and roadways
- Off-street bicycle/pedestrian paths developed as part of an expanded greenways network (see Community Character Policies 5A.1 to 4).



Current city efforts are focused on sidewalk construction, planning and development of off-street trails, and designation of bike routes along lower volume roadways. These programs should be continued and expanded and additional attention given to establishing bike facility enhancements and intersection crossing treatments along higher volume roadways.

Accommodating pedestrian and bicycle movement in **transportation improvement projects** through the incorporation of features such as sidewalks and bike lanes is key to developing a comprehensive network. Opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian treatments should be evaluated early in the planning and design of all roadway, transit, and rail projects. In addition, the potential for new transportation facilities to disrupt existing or future pedestrian/bicycle routes should be carefully considered and necessary steps taken to mitigate such impacts.



Bicycle and pedestrian levels of service or performance standards are emerging concepts that are based on known

safety and comfort thresholds of pedestrians and bicyclists.² Commonly applied to vehicular traffic, level of service criteria should be considered for bicycle and pedestrian as well to help ensure that public facility improvements are designed to provide adequate capacity, user comfort, and safety characteristics.

Private **development standards** should also be reviewed for opportunities to promote installation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in appropriate locations.

8B.4 Develop a **map of “missing links”** in the trails system, and **require dedication at the time of development**. [see also Community Character Policy 5.A.4]

Narrative:

The City’s **Drainageway and Open Space Map** provides the framework for development of an interconnected system of off-street trails, structured around stream corridors. This map can be used to identify critical gaps in the system needed to connect existing trails and trails programmed for construction. In addition to trails along streams, upland connections should be identified in critical locations between adjacent watersheds. The system should extend into Guilford County, where the greatest opportunities for development of new trails exist, as part of a regional network. As described in Community Character Policy 5A.4, one means of implementing the system is to revise the Development Ordinance to require dedication of identified “missing trail links” at the time of development.



8C. Improve local transit service

8C.1 Support **long-range transit planning**.

Narrative:

The Greensboro Transit Authority (GTA), a division of GDOT, provides **local transit service** within the City of Greensboro. **Regional express bus service** connecting Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and High Point via a transfer center near the Piedmont Triad

² Two examples are the City of Fort Collins, CO and the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), the MPO for the Buffalo-Niagara region in New York. Fort Collins developed five performance measures for pedestrian traffic as part of a city-wide Pedestrian Plan. The GBNRTC developed a formula for determining the bicycle level of service of roadways based upon six parameters.

International Airport is operated by PART. PART has sponsored two current studies to evaluate potential **future regional transit service**: a commuter rail study for the Triad Region (referred to as the Mobility Major Investment Study, or MIS) and an Intercity Rail Study for potential service from Asheville to Raleigh via Greensboro. Figure 8-2 illustrates existing and potential future components of Greensboro's transit system, including:

- Existing local and regional express bus routes
- The Depot, an intermodal transportation center under development in the Downtown
- Potential future bus rapid transit lines and routes
- Potential future commuter rail lines and train stations

With respect to local transit service, GTA ridership has increased over the last five years. This trend has accelerated with service enhancements initiated in 2001, such as revised routes, connector shuttles, enhanced evening, and Sunday service. Planning for Greensboro's transit system should incorporate a long-range perspective, with the objective of developing coordinated local and regional systems that are integrated with land use patterns in a manner that promotes significantly greater transit usage. GTA has initiated a **Long Range Public Transportation Plan** that is expected to be complete in 2004. This plan will address long-range issues and needs for local transit, such as future service and routing needs and coordination with future regional transit service. Policies 8C.2 to 5 further elaborate on strategies needed to improve local transit service.



8C.2 Enhance the existing bus system through innovative alternatives to traditional fixed-route service and a focus on increasing passenger service and amenities.

8C.3 Promote transit use by encouraging or requiring transit-supportive design features in development plans. Emphasize the need for transit-supportive (higher-density, mixed-use) development at major activity centers.



- 8C.4** Investigate the feasibility of establishing **secondary transit centers** supported by pedestrian/bicycle connections and appropriate land uses (e.g., NCA&TSU, UNCG, Cone Memorial Hospital, etc.).
- 8C.5** Establish a **dedicated funding source** for transit, in addition to using the maximum tax levy allowance.

Narrative:

Policies 8C.2 to 5 address the **local transit system** operated by GTA. This system includes fixed routes radiating outward from the downtown, an Airport shuttle, and limited flex route service. A downtown multi-modal transportation center is scheduled to open in 2003 and will provide a significant enhancement to existing services. Planning for local transit service should continue to explore and implement where practical a variety of **additional enhancements**, including:

- Demand-responsive services
- Use of smaller vehicles where ridership will not support large buses on fixed routes
- Service to connect neighborhoods and employment centers around the periphery of the City
- Improved service and amenities (service dependability, clean fuel buses, passenger waiting areas, etc.) to make transit a more attractive option
- Systematic efforts to improve the accessibility of the fixed route bus system for persons with disabilities

Integrated transit service and land use patterns are necessary to ensure the long-term viability of local transit. Thus **land use planning** should support future transit service by promoting:

- Mixed-use, higher density activity centers that can function as nodes for transit service, including possible secondary transit centers to complement the downtown multi-modal transportation center
- Incorporation of transit features into significant private and public development projects. Examples include provisions for bus stops such as pull-offs, passenger shelters, convenient walkway access to buildings, and pedestrian-friendly design techniques, such as siting parking behind buildings.

Increased, sustainable funding is another key to enhancing local transit service. One key source is local funding. Locally derived funding for transit funds comes from a variety of sources, including a special transit tax. Although this tax is authorized at up to \$.035 per \$100 property valuation, the City is currently levying only \$.015 per \$100 property valuation.

Another key source is state and federal funding. The City and the MPO should actively support state and federal initiatives to increase funding opportunities for alternative modes of transportation.

8D. Support development of a regional transit system in coordination with the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation

8D.1 Prepare for future regional transit service, e.g.:

- Preserve/develop major corridors consistent with the regional system
- Encourage development compatible with regional transit service (higher-density, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly) at suitable nodes or activity centers
- Investigate and support transit technologies (bus rapid transit, regional rail, express bus, light rail, etc.) appropriate for specific markets and corridors
- Coordinate roadway improvement projects to support, rather than complicate or compete with, regional transit service



8D.2 Develop coordinated park-and-ride and feeder/express bus services to support the future regional system

Narrative:

As noted in Policy 8C.1, PART has sponsored two current studies to evaluate potential **future commuter rail and inter-city rail service**. The Mobility MIS addresses alternatives for commuter rail or bus rapid transit service in the Triad region, while the Intercity Rail Study evaluates alternative corridors within the Triad for potential rail service from Asheville to Raleigh via Greensboro. (The State of North Carolina would implement this service.) The City should participate in evaluating the alternatives and selecting preferred corridors and technologies. Land use and transportation planning efforts should support the designated corridors, including measures to:

- Preserve future rights-of-way from encroachments
- Encourage transit-oriented development at proposed station locations
- Coordinate with other transportation facilities and services, such as roadways, local transit service, pedestrian/bicycle facilities, and park-and-ride lots

8E. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy

8E.1 Conduct a full review of current parking standards. Consider eliminating minimum parking requirements in some cases, or establish **maximum parking standards** in addition to current minimum requirements

8E.2 Ensure that **parking standards** are not an impediment to **infill development**

8E.3 Facilitate **shared parking** where appropriate

Narrative:

The **parking standards** contained in the City's development regulations influence land use patterns and the transportation choices made by Greensboro residents. For example, generous parking standards for suburban commercial development reinforce automobile usage, increase impervious surface areas, and result in lower land-use densities. The same standards applied in urban contexts, on the other hand, can discourage desired infill/redevelopment or disrupt established, pedestrian-oriented development patterns. While parking standards typically specify minimum requirements with no limit on the number of spaces that can be built above the minimum, there is a growing movement towards applying maximum standards as well for certain uses to address the impacts of large, under-utilized parking lots. The City should undertake a comprehensive review of the current parking standards to ensure that they are consistent with currently accepted practice and specify the minimum amounts necessary to support different land uses. **Shared parking arrangements** (e.g., parking lots serving office uses during the day and theater/restaurant uses during the night) should be encouraged to minimize the amount of land required for parking. Enactment of maximum standards, elimination of minimum standards, and other innovative arrangements should be considered in certain situations. For example, reduction or elimination of on-site parking requirements combined with provision of shared, off-site, or on-street parking can be used to promote infill development and alternative travel modes in urban settings where limited land is available for parking.

8E.4 Continue to implement improvements to **downtown parking**, including:

- Parking supply and location
- Long-term and short-term parking
- On-street and off-street parking
- Rates and fines
- Free parking after hours



Narrative:

GDOT's Business/Parking Division manages the supply of on-street and off-street parking in downtown Greensboro. This Division has recently developed a **Comprehensive Parking Study** in conjunction with the downtown businesses. Implementation of the study is underway and will continue for the next several years.

8F. Modify development standards to support transportation objectives

8F.1 Modify development standards for new developments and infrastructure projects to support transportation objectives, including:

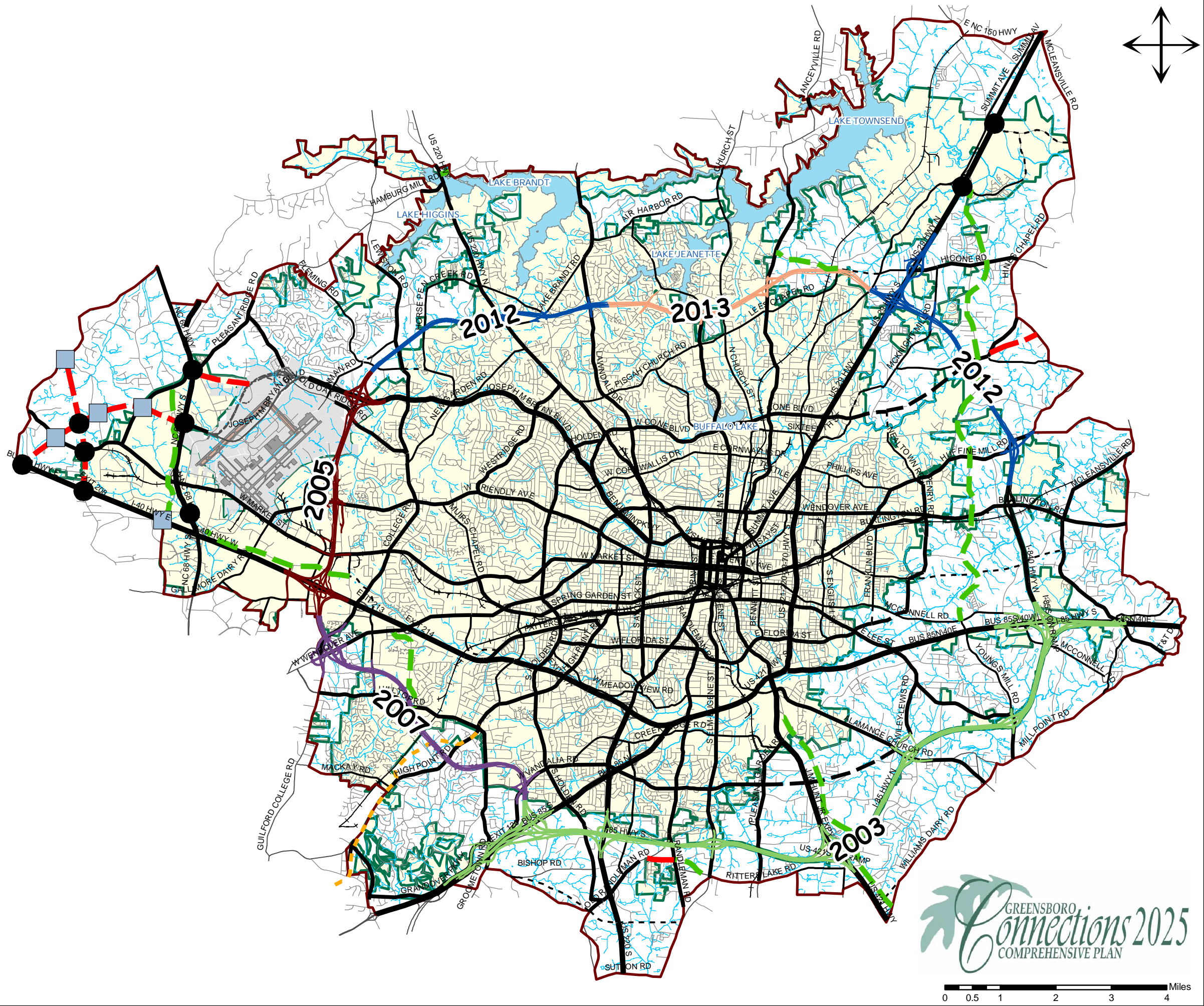
- Effective spacing and connectivity of collector roads
- Adequate connectivity of the local street system (eliminate cul-de-sacs, except where environmental constraints preclude street connectivity)
- Roadway standards flexible enough to allow context-appropriate designs
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities that are safe, convenient, and attractive
- Access management standards that preserve corridor capacities

Narrative:

GDOT is developing or plans to develop **enhanced design standards** to address issues such as sidewalks, access management, and street connectivity. This work should continue and be adopted as official policy by the City to ensure that standards for both private and public development projects reflect the policies of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The standards should incorporate flexibility to facilitate desired types of development (e.g., narrower pavement widths to promote infill or other forms of development and to reduce unnecessary developer costs and environmental impacts).

Figure 8-1
Plan Section 8.2

Roadway Network



● Conceptual Interchange

■ Conceptual Grade Separation

Roadway Network

— Existing Freeway

— Existing Major Thoroughfare

— Existing Minor Thoroughfare

— Proposed Freeway

— Proposed Major Thoroughfare

--- Proposed Minor Thoroughfare

— Conceptual New Major

— Conceptual New Minor

Urban Loop Completion Dates

— Existing

— Complete 2003

— Complete 2005

— Complete 2007

— Complete 2012

— Complete 2013

— Potential High Point Rd Realignment

--- Proposed Bryan Blvd. Realignment

■ Airport Property

■ Existing Runways

■ Proposed 3rd Runway

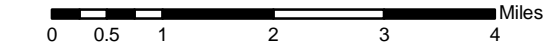
■ Water/Sewer Boundary

■ Greensboro

— Railroad

— Streams

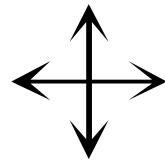
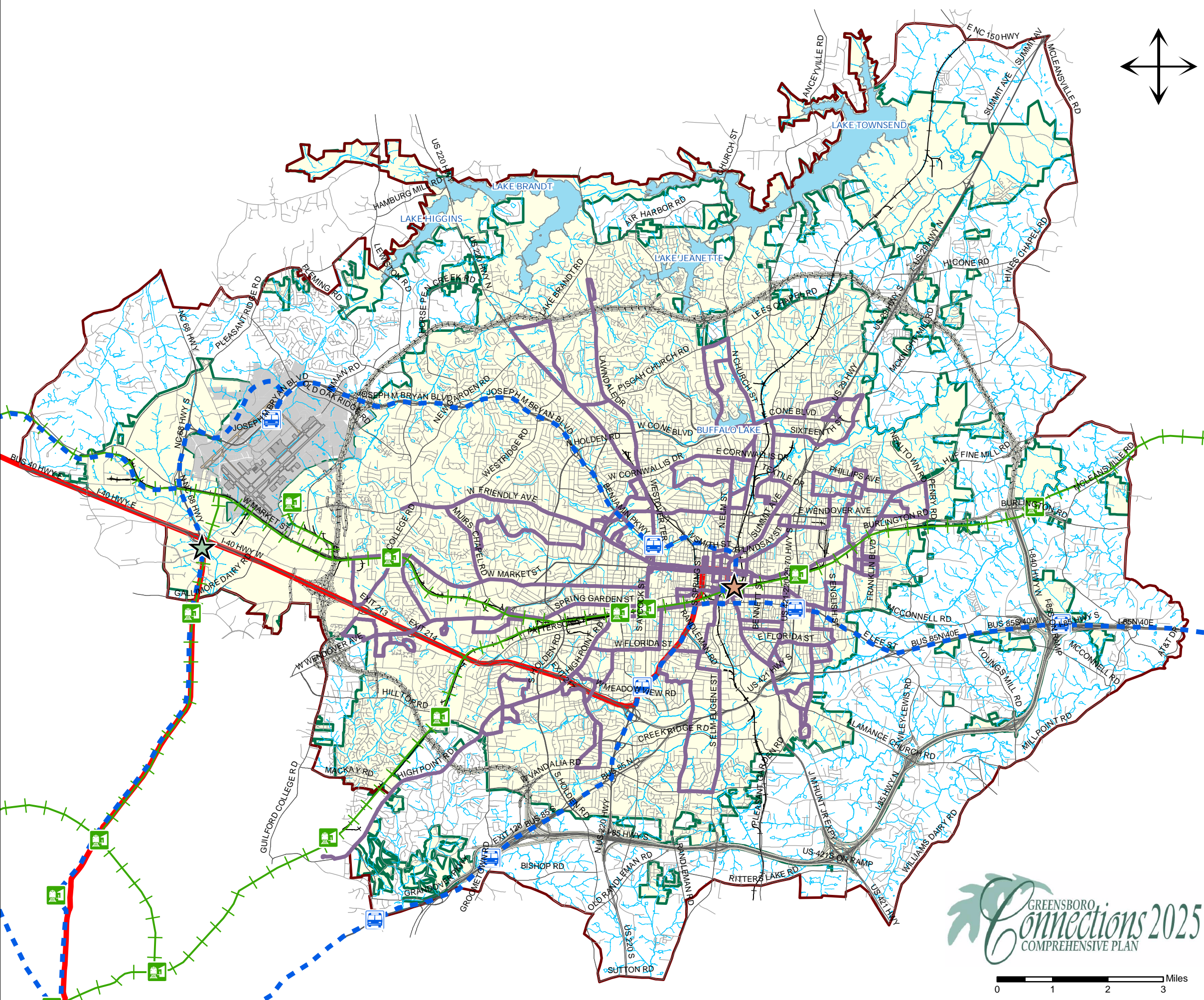
■ Lakes



Adopted May 6, 2003

Figure 8-2
Plan Section 8.2

Transit System



9.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 OVERVIEW

This element addresses several types of public facilities and services (police, fire, and libraries) and infrastructure systems (water, sewer, stormwater, and solid waste) provided by the City of Greensboro. Several other types of public facilities and infrastructure, including parks and recreation and transportation systems are addressed in other elements of the Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 5.0, Community Character, and Chapter 8.0, Transportation, respectively).



Areas of community consensus identified in the Vision Statement that are related to community facilities, services, and infrastructure include:

- The importance of good community services and facilities to **quality of life and livability**
- The need to ensure adequate **infrastructure capacity**; i.e., the ability to meet future needs for water, wastewater treatment, storm drainage, and solid waste management

Figure 9-1 shows the locations of existing community facilities within the Comprehensive Plan study area. Also shown on this map are potential school sites identified by Guilford County Public Schools, proposed library sites identified by Greensboro Public Library, and proposed fire station sites identified by the City's Fire Department.

In general, the City is doing a good job in providing community facilities and services for residents. Departments such as Parks and Recreation, Police, and Libraries have completed or are developing proactive plans for the future provision of facilities and services. The Fire Department has a process in place to plan for future facility needs based upon factors such as response time. Public water supply capacity issues are being addressed through the development of the Randleman Dam project, which is projected to meet the City's water needs for the next 30 to 40 years. However, the lack of a natural water source such as a river will affect the City's ability to provide for its long-term water supply and wastewater

treatment needs. Other important issues to consider in developing policies for community facilities, services, and infrastructure include:

- **Capacity of Solid Waste Disposal Facilities:** The White Street Landfill is projected to reach capacity in 2008. Options such as transfer stations are being explored to meet the City's future solid waste disposal needs.
- **Performance Standards vs. Cost Implications:** While the current provision of community facilities and services is generally good, future planning and programming will need to explore creative solutions to maintain current standards in a cost-effective manner while adapting to societal and technological trends. The current strategic planning effort for the libraries, for example, is moving away from the traditional emphasis on fixed, single-use facilities towards more creative ways of providing services (neighborhood resource centers, multi-use facilities, partnerships with other agencies, etc.).
- **Integrated Planning:** Coordination of community facility and service planning with land use and development policies within the water and sewer service area boundary is essential to ensure efficient, cost-effective provision of future public facilities and infrastructure. This includes the staging of development to permit efficient service delivery and maximize use of available infrastructure before requiring additions.

9.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOALS

Provide community facilities, services, and infrastructure in a cost-effective manner to meet citizens' needs, contribute to quality of life, and support desired land use patterns

POLICIES

9A. Proactively target infrastructure (water/sewer) extensions to support desired land use patterns [see also Land Use Policy 4F]

9A.1 Develop a Fringe Area Land Use Concept Plan [see Land Use Policy 4F.1], including:

- **Targeted growth areas as the priority locations for water/sewer extensions** in advance of development
- Guidelines for the desired form and pattern of development (e.g., compact, pedestrian-friendly, etc.) within the targeted growth areas [see also Land Use Policy 4G.1]

Narrative:

As described in the Land Use Element (Chapter 4.0), the City's decisions concerning extension of water and sewer infrastructure at the urban fringe have traditionally been reactive in nature; that is, they have occurred in piecemeal fashion in response to private development requests. The consequence of this type of "catch-up" approach has been the present fragmentary pattern of sprawl at the urban fringe. A key initiative of the Land Use Element is for the City to adopt a more **proactive, focused approach** to infrastructure planning and investment decisions, an approach that will serve to guide, rather than react to, growth and development patterns. Land Use Policy 4F.1 proposes that the City and County collaborate to create a Fringe Area Land Use Plan. This Land Use Plan will refine and elaborate upon the concept of **growth tiers** described in Land Use Policy 4F.2, which establish the basic framework for the staged expansion of infrastructure and public facility capacity. The framework should include a growth monitoring mechanism to monitor changes in reserve capacity levels. It should also provide specific criteria for the expansion of infrastructure and facilities consistent with the "tiered" approach, including, but not necessarily limited to:



- Contiguity with existing development patterns and present City limits
- Location within appropriate growth tier
- Availability of infrastructure capacity
- Consistency with City development standards
- Fiscal impact assessment and mechanisms for the allocation of public facility costs through a capital recovery fee [see Policy 9A.3 in this element]

9A.2 Develop a **phased capital program** for the extension of water and sewer lines in support of the Fringe Area Land Use Concept Plan.

9A.3 Identify a **funding source** (e.g., a revolving fund derived from a capital recovery fee on developments) for the phased capital program.

Narrative:

Capital recovery fees (CRFs) allow for the recovery of the cost of new infrastructure. Typically used for facilities such as wastewater treatment plants or toll bridges, capital recovery fees are discontinued upon the amortization of the facility.

North Carolina legislation enables local governments to assess fees to recover the costs associated with road and infrastructure improvements needed to serve development. In essence, capital recovery fee programs require new development to pay its share, on a pro-rata basis, of present and future needs for infrastructure capacity. In many communities that charge such fees, an independent financial consultant estimates the cost of providing additional water and sewer infrastructure capacity, on a per-gallon per-day (gpd) of average flows basis. CRFs are customarily assessed at the time that building permits for new development are issued.

The advantages and disadvantages of CRFs should be carefully considered prior to adoption. Because such fees can only be used to finance construction of new infrastructure (i.e., not repair, operation, or maintenance of existing facilities), CRFs are typically a tool of choice in fast-growing communities which are experiencing considerable development pressures and have an adequate supply of vacant land. In communities planning significant redevelopment, CRFs may be less useful. Another consideration is an increase in development costs, which may be perceived as a disincentive. Therefore, and in addition to CRFs, the City should investigate other funding source options to strengthen its ability to undertake new capital improvement initiatives.

9A.4 **Work with Guilford County** on the use of funds collected by the County for water/sewer improvements to support the phased capital program.

Narrative:

Greensboro's consolidated water and sewer utility provides service not only to city residents, but also to customers in various unincorporated areas of Guilford County. Thus increased policy coordination will be necessary in the future to ensure that the allocation and expenditure of infrastructure funds is consistent with the phased capital program proposed in Policy 9A.2 of this element, and with the "tiered" growth management strategy outlined in the Land Use Element. As a result, the **City/County Utility Agreement** will need to be reviewed for consistency with the new infrastructure and growth policies.

9A.5 Continue to link **City-initiated annexations** and **approvals of annexation petitions** to water/sewer extension policies regarding designated growth areas, to avoid costs of servicing scattered annexations throughout the fringe area.

Narrative:

In 2001, the City of Greensboro adopted a policy of extending water and sewer infrastructure only within a limited area defined by the **Water and Sewer Service Area Boundary**. This policy is consistent with the recognized need to more effectively manage the City's limited resources. Furthermore, analyses conducted for the Plan estimate that the area within the water and service boundary has the capacity to accommodate approximately 40 or more years of growth at current trends.¹ This capacity spread across a large geographic area could result in costly infrastructure extensions to serve dispersed developments if growth is not planned for and staged in a logical manner. Thus the extension policy should be further refined and applied consistent with the transitional growth tiers described in the Land Use Element.

9B. Proactively plan for the provision of sufficient capacity to meet the City's future infrastructure needs

9B.1 Continue to develop and implement a **plan for solid waste disposal:**

- Explore all feasible options except for expansion of the White Street facility
- Enhance the current recycling program and increase efforts to reduce the City's solid waste volume



Narrative:

The **White Street Landfill**, located in the northeastern part of Greensboro, is owned and operated by the City. This facility, consisting of approximately 850 acres, has a current life expectancy of less than 10 years within the current active phase. The City is currently considering a range of alternative solutions, such as transfer stations, to replace the existing facility when it reaches capacity.

¹ Documentation of the methodology used to develop the growth/capacity estimates is provided in Working Paper: Results of 9/4-6/01 Comprehensive Plan Charette, Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, November 2001.

9B.2 Develop a long-term plan to provide for the City's future **public water and wastewater treatment needs**, including:

- Coordination of water/sewer extensions with growth and development policies per Policies 9A.1 to 5 above
- Identification and promotion of long-term alternative methods to provide increased capacity and reduce consumption (e.g., cooperative arrangements among jurisdictions in adjacent watersheds on use of water supply, indirect potable reuse of treated effluent (recycling), and additional/more stringent conservation measures)

9B.3 **Complete plans within timeframes** sufficient to allow strategies for meeting future needs to be implemented before currently planned capacities are exceeded (e.g., within five years of completion of Randleman Lake for water supply needs).



Narrative:

Currently, Greensboro's **public water supply** comes from three impounded reservoirs (Lake Higgins, Lake Townsend, and Lake Brandt) that are fed by Reedy Fork Creek. The three reservoirs have capacity for approximately 8 billion gallons of water, with a "safe yield" level of approximately 31.5 million gallons per day (gpd) of finished water. For the past decade, however, water demand has routinely exceeded this production level, requiring the City to purchase additional water from Reidsville and, to a

lesser extent, from Winston-Salem and High Point. In addition, a water supply connection to Burlington is currently under design. Although this solution has raised safe capacity to about 38 million gpd, it is projected that the safe-yield level without Randleman Lake will again be exceeded sometime after 2005. The City is currently pursuing the Haw River project as another water source that will help ensure that the current safe yield will hold up during a multi-year drought.

The **Randleman Lake project**, originally authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1968, is scheduled to be complete by 2005-2006. Managed by the Piedmont Triad Regional Water Authority (PTRWA) and straddling Guilford and Randolph Counties, this project will increase Greensboro's water capacity by approximately 28 million gpd. However, Randleman will provide only a provisional solution to



Randleman Dam under construction

Greensboro's water problems, as it is expected to satisfy water supply needs in the entire Piedmont Triad Region for a period of about 30 to 40 years. Therefore, Greensboro should begin to explore long-term alternatives for meeting projected demand before the existing capacity is exceeded. These alternatives should include both providing additional water supply and reducing consumption (e.g., water conservation, use of reclaimed water for purposes such as industry and irrigation, and additional treatment to reclaim water for indirect potable reuse).

With respect to **wastewater treatment**, the City operates two wastewater treatment plants: North Buffalo and T.Z. Osborne. An expansion to the Osborne Plant is currently underway and will bring the combined capacity of the two plants to 56 million gpd, sufficient to meet projected demand for at least 20 years under current growth rates. Planning is needed to address:

- Greensboro's long-range wastewater treatment capacity needs
- The quality of water discharged from the plants to local streams. This issue is particularly important because of anticipated federal and state water quality standards.

9B.4 Continue the development and implementation of programs to manage **stormwater runoff** to prevent flooding, address water pollution, and improve the quality of the City's streams (e.g., through establishment of stream buffers that filter pollutants, shade and cool the water, provide channel stability, and provide flood storage capacity). [See also Community Character Policies 5B.3 & 4]



9B.5 Modernize **design standards for stormwater** structures and outlets to reflect emphasis on water quality, protection of stream ecology, and conformity with state regulatory expectations (e.g., use of bottomless culverts, reduction of riprap, etc.). [See also Community Character Policies 5B.3 & 4]



Stream Bank Restoration

Narrative:

Stormwater management is necessary to manage both the quantity and quality of runoff generated by developed areas (buildings, parking areas, roads, etc.). All available **best management practices** (BMPs) should be used to reduce the impacts of stormwater

runoff. Examples of BMPs include preserving natural vegetation, protecting unstable or steep slopes, retaining stormwater onsite through features such as wet detention ponds, and instituting measures to prevent sediment from leaving construction sites or recently cleared areas. To the extent feasible, standards for stormwater drainage structures should promote designs that emulate natural characteristics of ponds and streams (e.g., curved, "organic" geometries, gently sloping edges, and native plantings) and which, in addition to their primary function, serve as aesthetic amenities.

9C. Establish an ongoing system to identify community facility and service needs and allocate resources to meet them

9C.1 Enact a "community facility planning system" based upon **objective level of service standards** for each type of facility or service, similar to what fire, libraries, and parks and recreation have in place.

Narrative:

Although Greensboro has generally done well in providing basic public facilities and services to its growing population, incipient capacity problems indicate the need for a proactive approach to service provision. The adoption of a **community facility planning system** is essential to the implementation of this policy. One component of this system would be the adoption of **level of service** standards (LOS) or similar performance criteria to measure the capacity of each type of public facility or service and guide their planning for additional facilities or services. The LOS may be derived from government requirements, professional or industry standards, or even from measuring citizen expectations through surveys or other means. As indicated, some standards are already in place for fire, parks and recreation, and library services, while others need to be developed.



9C.2 Use the community facility planning system to ensure that **sufficient resources are allocated in operating and capital budgets** to maintain levels of services equitably throughout the City.

Narrative:

The systematic approach provided by the community facility planning process should be incorporated into the planning and programming activities of all City departments that provide facilities and services. Using existing and projected population characteristics, the current and projected provision of community facilities can be compared to levels of service

and adjustments made accordingly. Coordination should extend to service providers outside of City government, including Guilford County Public Schools.

- 9C.3** Ensure that Police and other service delivery departments are provided with **adequate new resources to serve newly annexed areas** rather than being required to serve these areas with existing resources, which dilutes levels of service throughout the City.

Narrative:

The costs of providing services and facilities to serve growth associated with continued annexation of land and additional population clearly underscores the need for a proactive long-term planning approach, to which the community facilities planning system is perfectly suited. To calculate additional staff and facility needs to serve newly annexed areas, objective LOS standards should be established. For police service, for example, the LOS can be based on a desired "maximum utilization" or workload capacity rate, on a maximum response time, or police officer/1,000 population. Regardless of the standard chosen for each type of community facility or service, all LOSs should be periodically evaluated and adjusted, if necessary, to respond to changing conditions.

- 9C.4** Coordinate with **Guilford County Public Schools** regarding the **identification of school sites** consistent with the City's policies for growth and redevelopment.



Photo courtesy of Guilford County Schools

Narrative:

Like public facilities and services provided by the City (police, fire, etc.), it is important that public schools be systematically planned for to ensure that future needs are met and that schools are located consistent with development trends and the growth management policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Guilford County Public Schools maintains a list of future school sites

needed to accommodate projected future enrollment. While attendance lines developed in 1999 may limit preferred sites for new schools, coordination between the City and Schools' Facilities staff will facilitate the sharing of critical information that affect school location (traffic conditions, population density, site size, etc.) Locating schools to be consistent with the "tiered growth" concept for the area at the city/county fringe and to promote neighborhood revitalization in the Urban Core will be key policy considerations. Such planning will also



Photo courtesy of Guilford County Schools

facilitate identification of potential sites as large-scale developments are considered.

9D. Emphasize shared rather than single-use facilities to promote cost efficiencies and more comprehensive service for residents

9D.1 Wherever possible, program new city facilities to **accommodate multiple uses** (e.g., the currently programmed Steveco facility (police/fire/water resources) and Horse Pen Creek fire station (fire/recreation)).

Narrative:

Shared or **multi-use facilities** are one way to achieve cost savings and more efficiency in service delivery. They also benefit residents through the convenience of providing more than one type of service in a location. While existing facilities may not always easily lend themselves to shared use because of design or other factors, the City should identify and pursue every possible opportunity to apply this concept in future facilities.

9D.2 Work with Guilford County Public Schools to establish joint facilities in designated growth areas (e.g., joint school/library/recreation area rather than separate, stand alone facilities).

Narrative:

Opportunities for establishing multi-use facilities should be sought not only between local government agencies, but also with other public service providers, both at the local and regional level. The objective would be to work together to achieve benefits such as limiting traffic, promoting alternative forms of transportation, and reducing the amount of new impervious surface developed. As one example, joint agreements with schools and other institutions for use of recreational facilities during off-hours are common in many jurisdictions. Not only can such joint-use agreements provide an innovative way to achieve park and recreation level of service standards, but often these facilities are better located in relation to the surrounding area to serve as neighborhood parks.

9D.3 Provide links to other city services that may not have a separate presence in the facility (e.g., computer stations that access the library system). [see Policy 9E.2]

9E. Pursue opportunities to establish community facilities as neighborhood anchors/activity centers

9E.1 Where feasible, **integrate community facilities into mixed-use centers** of activity for surrounding residents, thus contributing to quality of life and neighborhood vitality.

Narrative:

In addition to meeting specific community needs for delivery of programs and services, community facilities can function as hubs of neighborhood and community activity. In this capacity, such facilities can help further other Comprehensive Plan policies, such as those related to **neighborhood revitalization** or to supporting the establishment of **mixed-use centers**. New community facilities should be strategically located as to meet identified needs and to enhance neighborhood life. Mixed-use centers, which by definition act as destinations and places for communal activity, should be the preferred location for new facilities whenever possible. In the case of existing facilities, opportunities should be pursued to increase their present contribution to neighborhood vitality.

9E.2 Explore non-traditional means of providing services to residents, including **neighborhood resource centers** that provide access to multiple city services.

Narrative:

In many communities, service providers are examining and redefining their roles as society and community needs change. Libraries, for example, may provide community meeting and exhibit spaces, as well as "service kiosks" where citizens can access city services, whether on-line or through a "customer service" representative. A concept that is being explored in some American cities, **neighborhood resource centers** can provide convenient, "one-stop shopping" for residents through information and services made available via computer stations or other means.

9E.3 Respond to the unique **needs of Greensboro's diverse populations** (e.g., African American, Hispanic, etc.) in the provision of neighborhood-based community facilities, services, and programs.

Narrative:

The 2000 U.S. Census indicates that the City of Greensboro become more **ethnically diverse** between 1990 and 2000. During this period, the African American and American Indian populations grew 34.5 percent and 27 percent, respectively, while the Hispanic/Latino population grew by over 600 percent. Recognizing that these ethnic groups often have specific needs, the City should explore ways to meet these needs in the provision of services and programs, while creating opportunities for interaction and increased community involvement.

9F. Make Greensboro the “Safest City in the United States”

9F.1 Consistent with the "Strategic Five-Year Plan" of the Greensboro Police Department, implement an integrated approach to policing that focuses on **crime prevention**.

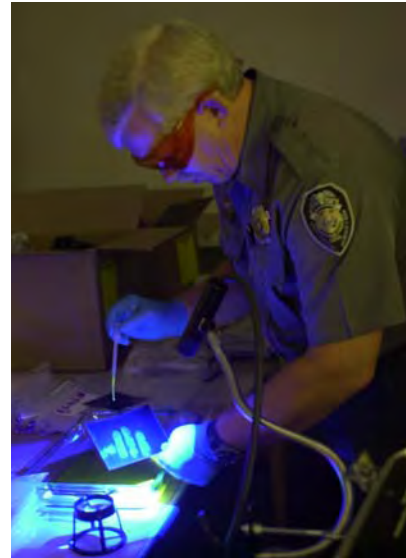
9F.2 Identify ways **other city departments can contribute to crime prevention** through partnerships with the police and citizens (e.g., by sponsoring programs to involve youths in meaningful activities).

9F.3 Involve residents in addressing **safety and crime prevention issues at a neighborhood level**.

9F.4 Pursue other Comprehensive Plan policies that will foster a “safer city,” e.g.:

- The **Neighborhood Planning Initiative** proposed as part of a comprehensive neighborhood conservation and improvement program [see Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 6A.1]
- Policies to increase economic opportunities for the minority community

9F.5 Increase **human, operational, and capital resources of the Police Department** to the level necessary to permit achievement of the envisioned quality of life for citizens in all neighborhoods.



Narrative:

The City of Greensboro Police Department was certified as a governmental agency in 1889. Today, the department maintains a workforce of over 680 employees, including over 500 law enforcement officers. This equates to a level of service ratio of approximately 2.28 officers per 1,000 citizens (based on 2000 population).

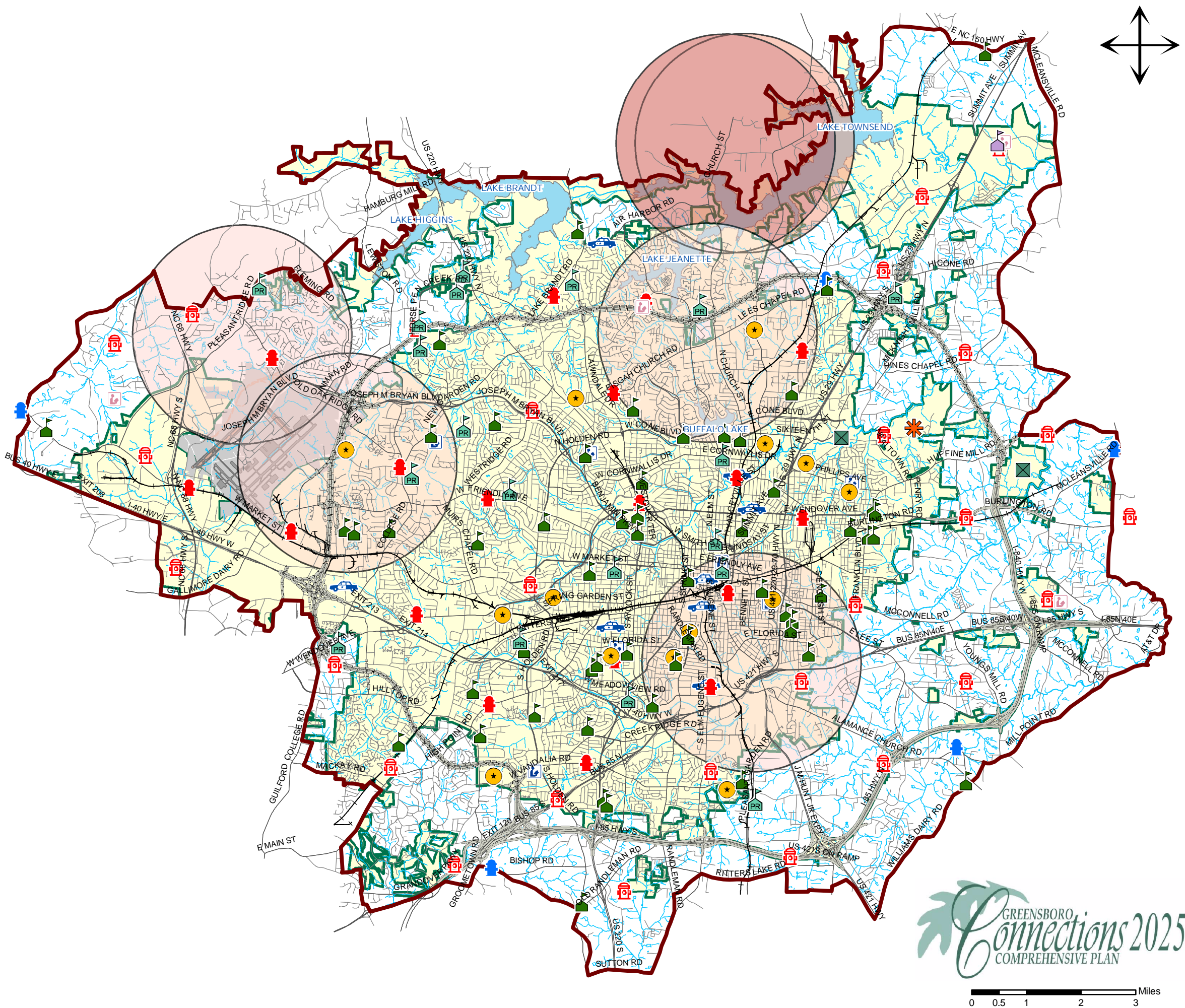
Policies 9F.1 to 5 are consistent with priorities established in the department's *Front and Center Five-Year Strategic Plan*, which is aimed at making Greensboro the **safest city in America**. A key operational goal of this plan is to decentralize and place service delivery closer to its end users for increased effectiveness. Key initiatives of the plan include:

- Handling emergencies quickly and fighting crime effectively
- Providing high visibility patrols
- Partnering in problem solving
- Creating an atmosphere of fairness and trust
- Focusing on prevention

Effective crime prevention is related to many different factors, such as economic opportunity, healthy neighborhoods with involved residents, and a good public school system. Similarly, other city departments have roles to play in crime prevention. Recreational programs for youths offered by the Parks and Recreation Department and small business, employment, and training programs supported by the City consistent with the policies of the Economic Development Element are examples.

Figure 9-1
Plan Section 9.1

Community Facilities



10.0 IMPLEMENTATION

10.1 OVERVIEW

Comprehensive Plans are turned into reality by concerted, consistent attention to implementation. This requires that the City administration, departments and present and future City Councils use the Comprehensive Plan as a key reference for all decisions and actions, consistent with the strategic initiatives and policies contained herein. The City's present comprehensive zoning ordinance and other development regulations evolved over time without the significant benefit of a community consensus or defined set of long-term goals and policies for the City's economic development, land use and development pattern. The City's present Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is not presently structured to reflect Comprehensive Plan policies, strategies, and priorities for major public investments. If the City is to exert the necessary leadership in addressing problems and seizing opportunities, it must create the necessary internal organization, secure the necessary resources, and commit to 'staying the course' in making such adjustments called for by the policies, strategies, and actions incorporated in this document.

The individual elements of the Comprehensive Plan call for specific strategies and actions to bring about the positive change reflected in the Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement, as articulated by the public and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The strategies and actions range from revised development standards and regulations to bold initiatives in open space and resource protection; from enhanced flexibility and incentives to major capital investments to promote re-investment and desired forms and patterns of development. While the Plan calls upon the City to pursue revenue enhancement and increased attention to the fiscal implications of development decisions, it is only prudent to establish a highly focused and realistic staged implementation program. This program sets priorities regarding the sequence in which the strategies and actions contained in the Plan are to be carried out. It is carefully designed to acknowledge fiscal and staff limitations and to pair incentives and cost reduction policies with those having increased cost implications. The program also incorporates a process and protocol for ensuring the compliance of City actions and policies to the Comprehensive Plan, as well as for monitoring implementation progress and incorporating plan revisions and updates.

This chapter describes an implementation program for the Comprehensive Plan, comprised of the following elements:

- A protocol for the application of, ***and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan in development review and approvals***, particularly regarding rezonings;

- A protocol for ***adopting, monitoring, amending, and updating*** the plan, indicating how it is to be used, tracked, updated and revised; and
- An ***action plan*** that identifies short-term (1 year), mid-term (2-3 years), and long-term (4-10 years) priorities for implementation.

10.2 BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The State of North Carolina gives local governments wide discretion in comprehensive planning. The language of the enabling statutes provides as follows:

Zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements. The regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such city. N.C. Gen. Statutes 160A-383

The references to many considerations on which zoning regulations and comprehensive plans may be based, including factors related to health, overcrowding, provision of public facilities, “character,” conserving value, and the “most appropriate use of land,” embraces the full range of policy considerations contained in the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan.

The City of Greensboro has been engaged in planning for its future for a number of decades. Greensboro has a city-wide comprehensive zoning ordinance which has served as its Comprehensive Plan according to State law. Likewise, Greensboro has in place many of the tools necessary to carry out plans and policies; including subdivision and other development ordinances and standards, a Capital Improvement Program, as well as focused planning for specific issues such as transportation, infrastructure and parks and recreation. What the City has lacked has been a consolidated plan document that articulates a vision for the City’s future along with integrated policies and strategies to achieve the vision. Upon adoption, the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan will become the City’s key policy document, separate and distinct from zoning, but to which future zoning and development regulations must be made consistent, as per state law. The following are more specific principles to be followed in ensuring compliance, as well as in amending, monitoring and updating the Comprehensive Plan.

10.3 REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Principle: Zoning and related development standards and ordinances shall be revised to maintain consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

The various Comprehensive Plan elements identify both specific revisions to standards and ordinances (such as for stream buffers and open space), as well as broader provisions to raise standards of quality and increase flexibility to adjust land use mixes and intensities. This principle **does not** suggest that, upon plan adoption, the zoning map, ordinance and its various zoning districts must undergo a wholesale revision. The Future Land Use Map is not intended to become or replace the zoning map. Rather, the Future Land Use Map conceptually depicts relatively broad categories of land use, as well as development policies.

Principle: Development applications shall be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and shall not be approved if found to be contrary to the Comprehensive Plan, unless the Plan is amended.

Because the Future Land Use Map and its policies are considerably broader than present zoning and development regulations, most development applications that are consistent with present zoning will also be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. In fact, in many cases, particularly those involving rezoning, the Comprehensive Plan review process will add considerable additional flexibility in the development review process. This will be true particularly in areas designated for redevelopment, infill or mixed use, where underlying zoning is more rigid or limited than that provided for in the Comprehensive Plan. However, in cases where a proposed development is in clear conflict with the Comprehensive Plan, such approvals may not be granted until and unless the Comprehensive Plan is amended. Such amendments shall be made by the City Council based on designated criteria or by non-appealed action for unanimous approval or any denial by the Zoning Commission on zoning map amendments associated with a Plan amendment as outlined in Section 10.4.2, Plan Amendments, Specific Provisions. (CP-04-03, Ord.No.04-124, 7-20-04; CP-08-14, Ord.No. 08-173, 6-17-08)

The Planning Director can approve minor modifications to the GFLUM outside city limits and inside the WSSA when equal or better performance can be demonstrated. A minor modification is considered a change within the same use category that is necessary to achieve compatibility with the surrounding area. For example, if a residential subdivision is proposed in an established area that is well below the 3 dwelling unit/acre (du/ac) minimum requirement of the Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan, then a minor modification to allow the density to go below the 3 du/ac minimum may be allowed in order to maintain compatibility with the surrounding area if equal or better performance can be demonstrated.

In this case equal or better could be: exceeding the environmental requirements, open space preservation, or accommodation of roads or public facilities.

A major modification to the GFLUM outside the city limits and inside the WSSA would occur if a proposed development were to meet any of the following criteria:

- There is a clear change in the GFLUM category, such as from residential to non-residential or vice versa; or
- If a proposed development is in clear conflict with the goals and policies of the Plan. (CP-07-15, Ord. No. 07-99, 6-19-07)

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

The following is a recommended checklist for the development of a more specific protocol and task list for Comprehensive Plan compliance, to be established within three months of Comprehensive Plan adoption.

1. Identify specific task schedules, resources and responsibilities to enact revisions to the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and associated development standards to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, consistent with the priorities and timeframes in the Action Plan.
2. Establish provisions for the review of all development applications, rezonings and plats to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Establish provisions to expand and modify the Capital Improvement Program to reflect policies, strategies, and priorities established in the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Establish procedures to revise City departmental strategic/master plans to reflect policies, strategies, and priorities established in the Comprehensive Plan.

10.4 PLAN ADOPTION, AMENDMENTS, MONITORING, AND UPDATING

10.4.1 PLAN ADOPTION

The Greensboro Comprehensive Plan shall be adopted, or amended, by the City Council or by non-appealed action for unanimous approval or any denial by the Zoning Commission on zoning map amendments associated with a Plan amendment as outlined in Section 10.4.2, Plan Amendments, Specific Provisions. The Comprehensive Plan shall be adopted by ordinance (or alternatively by resolution) following a public hearing. (CP-08-14, Ord.No. 08-173, 6-17-08)

10.4.2 PLAN AMENDMENTS

Comprehensive Plan amendments can be made without limit. Plan amendments shall be approved by a majority vote of City Council or by non-appealed action for unanimous

approval or any denial by the Zoning Commission on zoning map amendments associated with a Plan amendment as outlined in Section 10.4.2, Plan Amendments, Specific Provisions. However, the following shall NOT be considered to require plan amendments:

- Emergency situations requiring immediate actions or development approvals necessary to protect public health or welfare;
- Corrections of errors, clarifications of intent and updating of data which do not substantially alter plan policies, or which rectify unintentional negative impacts;
- Requests associated with rezoning cases that do not involve a significant physical change resulting in new or expanded structures;
- Requests associated with rezoning cases of less than one acre;
- Requests associated with rezoning cases of no more than 10 acres located within two or more land use classifications, if at least 60% of the site lies within compatible land use classification(s);
- Requests associated with rezoning cases if the proposed residential density is within 10% of the maximum or minimum residential density for the existing future land use classification; and
- Requests associated with rezoning cases for neighborhood-oriented non-residential or mixed uses in residentially designated areas if limited to the Commercial-Neighborhood (C-N), Commercial-Low (C-L), Mixed Use-Low (MU-L), or Mixed Use-Medium (MU-M) zoning districts and if:
 - Public assembly spaces are limited to neighborhood scale;
 - Maximum heights are limited to 50 feet;
 - Total square footage for all building is limited to 20,000 square feet. If a mixed use project any residential or office on upper floors would not count towards this total if the ground floor is used solely for non-residential purposes;
 - Proposal incorporates similar architectural features and clear pedestrian connections to adjacent residential development.

(CP-04-03, Ord.No.04-124, 7-20-04; CP-05-14, Ord.No.05-186, 9-20-05; CP-07-38, Ord.No.07-233, 10-16-07; CP-08-14, Ord.No. 08-173, 6-17-08)

Specific Provisions

The following is a checklist for Comprehensive Plan amendments:

1. Plan amendments that are not part of a rezoning request should be packaged for review by the Planning Board, and their recommendations forwarded to City Council for their consideration following a public hearing.
2. In cases where a Plan amendment is associated with a rezoning application, the rezoning case shall be presented to the Zoning Commission. The rezoning case and

Plan Amendment will then be forwarded to City Council for their consideration, unless there is non-appealed action for unanimous approval or any denial by the Zoning Commission on zoning map amendments associated with a Plan amendment (CP-07-38, Ord.No.07-233, 10-16-07; CP-08-14, Ord.No. 08-173, 6-17-08)

3. In cases where a major modification is needed in the WSSA outside of the city limits, the amendment shall be taken to the Planning Board for review and recommendation following a public hearing and then forwarded to the City Council for final action. This process will not be required for situations considered to be minor modifications. The rezoning for the subject property shall be processed through the County. (CP-07-15, Ord. No.07-99, 6-19-07)
4. Plan amendments may include modifications to goals, objectives, strategies and actions; or modifications to the Generalized Future Land Use Map. The amendments can be made in conjunction with rezoning applications that are contrary to the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Amendments should not be made without an analysis of immediate needs and consideration of the long-term effects. In considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the City should be guided by factors that include, but are not limited to:
 - the need for the proposed change;
 - the effect of the proposed change on the need for city services and facilities;
 - the implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the plan; and
 - unforeseen circumstances or the emergence of new information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3).

(CP-04-03, Ord.No.04-124, 7-20-04; CP-05-14, Ord.No.05-186, 9-20-05; CP-08-14, Ord.No. 08-173, 6-17-08)

10.4.3 PLAN MONITORING AND UPDATING

If a Comprehensive Plan is to have value and usefulness over time, it is important to develop ways of monitoring its effectiveness and approaches for keeping it current as new information becomes available and as circumstances change. The Plan should not be adopted with the thought that it will, without care and maintenance, provide a tool to guide growth, development change for more than 5 years. This supports the notion that planning is an on-going process. A Comprehensive Plan is not an end in itself. Without the evaluation and feedback loop, a Plan can soon become irrelevant: it needs to be able to respond to changing needs and conditions. Therefore, the City will monitor plan implementation progress annually and update the Comprehensive Plan at least every five (5) years.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

The following is a recommended checklist for the development of a more specific protocol and task list for comprehensive plan monitoring and updating, to be established within three months of Comprehensive Plan adoption.

Monitoring

1. At each anniversary of plan adoption the Planning Department shall submit to the Planning Board and City Council an annual report indicating actions taken and progress made toward plan implementation, along with requests for plan amendments due to altered circumstances or in response to citizen requests.
2. Develop benchmarks as part of an overall Plan monitoring program, to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation efforts and adherence to the Plan.
3. Include policies to provide a process for monitoring implementation progress and adopting plan amendments, including consideration of an on-going role for a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The monitoring committee will include some members of the current Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee in addition to representatives from other community stakeholder groups.
4. Maintain a two-way dialogue with the public, developers, groups, associations, and agencies on an on-going basis throughout the year, in order to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan.
5. Before amendments are considered for adoption, citizens should be provided with effective ways for participating in the decision-making process.

(CP-04-03, Ord.No.04-124, 7-20-04)

Updating

No less than every five (5) years the City shall initiate a process to revise the Comprehensive Plan. The revision process will include the following:

- Creation of a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (representative of all segments of the community);
- Updating of the Comprehensive Plan City Data Book;
- Preparation of an evaluation and appraisal report, documenting Comprehensive Plan effectiveness and implementation efforts, identifying constraints upon implementation, and summarizing conditions and trends which have changed in the period since plan adoption; and
- Revision of goals, objectives, policies and actions to reflect changing circumstances, emerging needs and opportunities, and **expressed citizen priorities**.

10.5 ACTION PLAN

Table 10.1 presents an **Action Plan** for implementing new Comprehensive Plan initiatives according to timeframe and relative priority. Three types of actions are included, defined as follows:

- **Program:** entails detailed, focal area-level planning or additional studies necessary to implement concepts and strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Regulations and Standards:** involves revising development standards, zoning regulations and protocols for development review, approvals and appeals. Numerous individual recommendations for ordinance changes are presented in the various Plan elements.
- **Capital Investment:** require significant financial commitment to a capital project or projects.

All actions assigned to one or more of three timeframes, as follows:

Short-Range Actions (within one year from plan adoption)

Actions that are designated to occur within one year from plan adoption are generally those which are high priorities and for which minimal additional study is needed, and which can be accomplished with existing staff and financial resources. Examples include relatively straightforward changes to development standards and ordinances, such as those pertaining to fringe area annexation criteria and open space, tree protection, and stream corridor requirements. Also included among the immediate action priorities are initial "study" components necessary to better define needs, resources and priorities for such initiatives as scenic corridor enhancement, heritage tourism, historic preservation and the expansion of land resources suitable for business development.

Mid-Range Actions (within 2-3 years from plan adoption)

Actions designated to be carried out in Years 2-3 generally fall into two categories. First, are high priority items that will require significant additional study or more detailed planning, or those for which sufficient resources may not be immediately available. Examples include the creation of various new funding mechanisms for open space acquisition, re-vegetation, capital improvements, and affordable housing. A second category includes items that require coordination or actions by other entities, such as the adoption of a more detailed City-County Fringe Area Plan and requests for state legislative authorizations for additional redevelopment tools and for extra-territorial jurisdiction.

Long-Range Actions (within 4-10 years from plan adoption)

Actions designated to be carried out four or more years from plan adoption are generally those which are likely to require at least three years to precisely define needs and opportunities, create programs and partnerships and establish funding resources. Hence, many of these actions are described as "carrying out" programs and strategies defined in the mid-range. Likewise, in this timeframe are actions which are less urgent, or which require sizable long range investment commitments, such as initiatives for mass transit and for expansion of water, wastewater and solid waste system capacities.

In many cases actions are carried out in several increments, staged over a number of years. For example, Policy 7C.1, which calls on the City to ensure the adequacy of land suitable for business development, would be implemented by specific actions in each of the three time periods. First, in the short range, within one year of plan adoption, an inventory of suitable land and development capacity would be documented by initial research. Second, in the mid-term, 2-3 years following plan adoption, zoning adjustments would be made and capital improvement (CIP) priorities would be set, in order to expand the supply of developable land. Finally, in the long term, 4-10 years from plan adoption, actual expansion of business development will be expected as a result of capital improvements, business recruitment and other long range initiatives such as a Technology Development Zone.

The *Action Plan* is not intended to be a definitive prescription or a rigid formula. Rather, it is suggested as a framework to guide decision-making and allocation of resources; a "task list" to ensure steady progress in carrying out the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. While the Comprehensive Plan incorporates reasonable flexibility, the degree of success in implementing the Plan will be a reflection of the City's ability to consistently act in accordance with the *Action Plan*.

The *Action Plan* does not preclude certain actions from being implemented earlier or later than indicated, subject to the availability of resources. In carrying out the tasks indicated in the table, city staff must make a good faith effort to achieve a balance between actions that place additional restrictions on development and those that provide additional flexibility, consistent with the plan goals and policies.

Table 10-1. Action Plan

Element	Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(FY03/04)	(FY04/05 – 05/06)	(FY06/07 – 12/13)
LAND USE (Chapter 4.0) Reinvestment / Infill (Section 4.5.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Establish criteria</u> to define desirable infill development (4A.1)• <u>Revise City regulations and policies</u> to facilitate infill development (4A.2)• <u>Adjust development fees</u> to lessen burdens on investments in designated urban areas (4A.3)• <u>Establish standards, guidelines and incentives</u> for compact, infill and mixed use development forms (4C.1-3)• <u>Encourage use of (existing) financial incentives</u> for reinvestment in historic/abandoned properties (4D.4)• Begin <u>identification of reinvestment corridors</u> for capital improvements (e.g. streetscape/landscaping, utility upgrades, etc.) (4B.3)• <u>Pursue state legislative initiatives</u> to make available additional redevelopment tools (tax increment financing) (4D.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conduct Community-wide public infrastructure assessments</u> and prioritize deficiencies in a revised CIP (4B.1-2)• <u>Conduct City-wide inventory</u> of potential infill/reuse sites and establish development target areas/sites (4D.1-2)• <u>Provide (expanded) incentives</u> for businesses/services in under-served neighborhoods (4D.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Carry out urban area/infill capital investments</u> prioritized in the CIP (4B.2)• <u>Provide direct City support to private investment</u> in target areas/sites (4D.3)
Downtown (Section 4.5.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Support</u> private downtown development initiatives (<u>incentives, capital improvements</u>) (4E.2)• Identify significant <u>downtown historic resources</u> (4E.3)• Begin to address <u>preservation of significant downtown historic resources</u> in public/private initiatives (4E.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Establish a program of City initiatives</u> for downtown development (4E.1)• Continue <u>preservation of significant downtown historic resources</u> in public/private initiatives (4E.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Carry out a program of City initiatives</u> for downtown development (4E.1)• Continue <u>preservation of significant downtown historic resources</u> in public / private initiatives (4E.3)
Growth at the Fringe (Section 4.5.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Initiate a Fringe Area Land Use Plan</u> in coordination with Guilford County (4F.1, 9A.1)• Establish and seek county support for <u>mechanisms to implement growth tiers</u>, to address the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Development staging- Annexation criteria (contiguity, infrastructure capacity, fiscal impact, etc.)- Extension of public facilities (4F.2-3)• Create, refine and apply guidelines and incentives to <u>promote compact development</u> (4G.1) [See also 4C.1 & 3, 6C. 1-2]• <u>Coordinate infrastructure policies</u> to ensure consistency with compact development designations (4G.2)• <u>Begin development of a Fringe Area component of a more detailed Open Space and Greenways Plan</u> with the County (4G.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Develop and adopt a Fringe Area Land Use Plan</u> in coordination with Guilford County (4F.1, 9A.1)• <u>Initiate designation</u> of the fringe as Greensboro's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (4F.4)• <u>Establish a plan to provide infrastructure</u> in advance of development, consistent with growth tiers (4F.5)• <u>Expand designation of scenic roadways</u> with the County (4G.5, 5C.2, 5F.1)• <u>Create a Conservation Development zoning district</u> (4G.3)• <u>Complete development of a Fringe Area component of a more detailed Open Space Greenways Plan</u> with the County (4G.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Carry out a plan to provide infrastructure</u> in advance of development, consistent with growth tiers (4F.5)• <u>Carry out a Fringe Area component of a more detailed Open Space and Greenways Plan</u> with the County (4G.4)
COMMUNITY CHARACTER (Chapter 5.0) Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources (Section 5.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Begin preparation of a more detailed Open Space and Greenway Plan</u>, including identification of priority conservation areas, linkage elements (trails), urban park components, and stream corridors (4G.4, 5A.1 and 4, 8B.4)• <u>Create/modify regulatory requirements and incentives</u> for:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- open space dedications (5A.3) [to work hand in hand with the preparation of the updated Open Space and Greenway plan (Policies 4G.4., 5A.1&4)]- tree protection (5B.1)- tree planting / landscaping (5B.2)- stream corridor protection (5B.3)- floodplain management (5B.4)• <u>Establish priorities/costs</u> for a community-wide tree planting initiative (5C.1)• <u>Continue Stormwater Master planning efforts</u> (5B.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Complete the update of the Open Space and Greenways Plan</u> (4G.4, 5A.1 and 4, 8B.4)• <u>Create implementation/funding mechanisms</u> for a community-wide tree planting/re-vegetation program (5C.1)• <u>Continue Stormwater Master planning efforts</u> (5B.4)• <u>Consider options for development of comprehensive stream map</u> (5B.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Implement the Open Space and Greenways Plan</u>, including tools such as a bond program, dedicated tax revenue, incentives/requirements for (stream corridor/"missing links") dedications, easements, and partnerships with land trusts (4G.4, 5A.1,2 and 4, 8B.4)• <u>Initiate implementation of a community-wide tree planting/re-vegetation program</u> (5C.1)• <u>Implement portions of the Stormwater master plan, including Capital Improvement Programs to address quantity and quality issues</u> (5B.4)• <u>Begin to develop comprehensive stream map</u> (5B.3)

Element	Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(FY03/04)	(FY04/05 – 05/06)	(FY06/07 – 12/13)
COMMUNITY CHARACTER (Chapter 5.0) (continued) Man-Made Environment (Section 5.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Establish priorities, costs and resources</u> to create an on-going historic survey program, and to expand protection of historic resources (5D.1-2) • <u>Investigate mechanisms/partnership opportunities</u> to promote a heritage tourism initiative (5D.3) • <u>Identify priority corridors</u> for scenic corridor overlay districts (5F.1) • <u>Create new City-wide and special district design standards including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scenic corridor overlay districts (5F.1) - commercial "big box" (5F.2) - pedestrian-oriented (5F.2) - buffers / screening (5F.2) - signage (5F.2) - roadway corridor aesthetics / access mgt., etc. (5F.2 and 4) • <u>Create/revise mechanisms</u> to apply design standards to new and (retroactively) to existing developments (5F.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Identify priorities, funding sources, and partnership opportunities for a phased capital program</u> to enhance City gateways, corridors and landmarks (5C.2, 5E.1) • <u>Create implementation/funding mechanisms</u> for an on-going historic survey program, and to expand protection of historic resources (5D.1-2) • <u>Create/support partnership efforts</u> to promote a heritage tourism initiative (5D.3) • <u>Develop aesthetic standards and design guidelines</u> for public building and spaces (5E.2) • <u>Continue new City-wide and special district design standards including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scenic corridor overlay districts (5F.1) - commercial "big box" (5F.2) - pedestrian-oriented (5F.2) - buffers / screening (5F.2) - signage (5F.2) - roadway corridor aesthetics / access mgt., etc. (5F.2 and 4) • <u>Continue to create/revise mechanisms</u> to apply design standards to new and (retroactively) to existing developments (5F.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Initiate implementation</u> of an on-going historic survey program, and expand protection of historic resources through historic designations, easements, etc. (5D.1-2) • <u>Continue to support partnership efforts</u> to promote a heritage tourism initiative (5D.3) • <u>Initiate phased capital program</u> to enhance City gateways, corridors and landmarks (5C.2, 5E.1)
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS (Chapter 6.0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Implement</u> a Neighborhood Planning Initiative (6A.1) • <u>Implement measures to protect neighborhoods</u> from inconsistent development by private and public projects (6A.4) • <u>Initiate a program</u> to reclaim/eliminate substandard housing/blighting influences (6B.1) • Explore strategies to <u>promote rehabilitation of historic houses and buildings</u> (6B.2) • <u>Research/create and apply flexible, variable density bonuses</u> for various housing types (transit/pedestrian-oriented, mixed use, affordable) (6C.1) • <u>Revise residential zoning</u> districts to encourage mixed housing types (6C.2) • <u>Consider ways to provide more affordable housing</u> in large developments (6C.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Carry out</u> a Neighborhood Planning Initiative (6A.1) • <u>Carry out mechanisms</u> to protect neighborhoods from inconsistent developments (6A.4) • <u>Identify initiatives</u> to reduce poverty concentrations/promote mixed-income neighborhoods (6A.2) • <u>Create an on-going strategy</u> for housing and neighborhood condition monitoring (6A.3) • <u>Carry out a program</u> to reclaim/eliminate substandard housing/blighting influences (6B.1) • Implement strategies to <u>promote rehabilitation of historic houses and buildings</u> (6B.2) • <u>Create programs/mechanisms</u> to improve maintenance of existing housing stock (6B.3) • <u>Establish a mechanism</u> to provide information on availability of housing affordable to those 80% or less than median income (6B.4) • <u>Increase initiatives</u> to address housing/support service needs of needy citizens (6B.5) • <u>Consider increasing the dedicated funding source</u> for expanded housing programs (6B.6) • <u>Implement mechanism</u> to provide more affordable housing (6C.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the Neighborhood Planning Initiative with <u>on-going neighborhood programs/services</u> (6A.1) • <u>Carry out initiatives</u> to reduce poverty concentrations/promote mixed-income neighborhoods (6A.2) • <u>Carry out an on-going strategy</u> for housing and neighborhood condition monitoring (6A.3) • <u>Carry out programs/mechanisms</u> to improve maintenance of existing housing stock (6B.3)

Element	Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(FY03/04)	(FY04/05 – 05/06)	(FY06/07 - 12/13)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Chapter 7.0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Define the economic development objectives and related strategies</u> of the City of Greensboro (7A.1) • <u>Encourage "home-grown" and community-based businesses</u>, emphasizing opportunities for minorities and under-served parts of the community (7A.2) • <u>Revise incentive guidelines</u> to make consistent with the new economic development objectives (7A.5) • <u>Enact regulatory changes</u> to make it easier to start/operate small businesses (e.g. live-work units, review home occupation ordinance) (7A.6) • <u>Provide assistance on economic development matters</u> to individuals and businesses (7B.1) • <u>Create a permitting appeals process</u> to Department Head/City Manager (7B.2) • <u>Adopt results-oriented economic development</u> as part of City government mission statement (7B.3) • <u>Conduct inventory of land suitable</u> for business development to include East Greensboro and other under-served areas (zoned/has infrastructure available) (7C.1) • <u>Continue to provide funding to agencies/organizations</u> involved in economic development, consistent with the City's economic development objectives (7D.1) • Support GDOT/PART <u>programs to connect workers to jobs</u> (7D.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Increase resources for economic development</u> (high level staffing, Minority Business Development Council, Economic Development Investment Fund) (7A.3, 7D.4) • Based on economic development objectives, <u>provide incentives for priority economic development projects</u> (7A.4) • <u>Adjust zoning/capital improvement priorities</u> to ensure that adequate land is zoned and has infrastructure available for business development with a special emphasis on East Greensboro and other under-served areas (7C.1) • <u>Maintain and publicize an inventory</u> of available economic development sites with a special emphasis on East Greensboro and other under-served areas (7C.2) • <u>Identify brownfield/abandoned sites</u> and pursue funding especially in Downtown, East Greensboro, and other under-served areas (7C.3) [See also 4D.1-6] • <u>Explore the feasibility of a technology development zone to include sites in East Greensboro and other under-served areas</u> (7C.4) • <u>Continue and expand the City's role as a catalyst</u> in facilitating priority economic development projects (legislative authorization) (7D.2) • <u>Promote economic development through public/private partnerships</u> (i.e. universities, adult ed., work with NCA&TSU to establish a research park on the A&T farm property) (7D.3) • Continue to support GDOT/PART <u>programs to connect workers to jobs</u> (7D.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take <u>actions necessary to expand availability of land for business development</u> through zoning, provision of infrastructure and other necessary means to include a special focus on East Greensboro and other under-served areas (7C.1) • Pursue and <u>secure priority economic development projects</u> by applying new/revised incentives, use of City funding for "catalyst" projects, and use of additional redevelopment tools and funding sources, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brownfield sites/abandoned properties (7C.3) - Technology Development Zone (7C.4) - East Greensboro development initiatives (7C.5) - Public/private partnerships (7D.2-3) • Continue to support GDOT/PART <u>programs to connect workers to jobs</u> (7D.5)
TRANSPORTATION (Chapter 8.0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Modify internal GDOT policies, programs and priorities</u> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prioritize a comprehensive maintenance program (8A.1) - maximize capacity of existing roadways before new construction (8A.2) - address deficiencies by eliminating gaps and bottlenecks (8A.3) - modify LOS expectations in special areas (8A.5) - expand traffic management programs (8A.11) • <u>Develop a Collector Street Plan</u> to promote enhanced connectivity (8A.8) • <u>Begin development of a strategic road investment plan</u> for under-served areas, tied to land use/environmental goals (8A.4) • <u>Identify and pursue grants and other funds</u> for bicycle facilities, sidewalks and trails (8B.2) • <u>Initiate consideration of accelerated development of key highway improvements:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - northern portion of the urban loop (8A.9) - US 29/urban loop interchanges (8A.10) • <u>Evaluate and expand as necessary present provisions for</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - funding for construction and maintenance of bicycle facilities, sidewalks and trails (8B.1) - development standards to promote walkability (8B.2) - coordination of pedestrian/bicycle improvements with roadway and transit plans (8B.3) - identification of "missing links" in the trail system (8B.4, 5A.4) - parking standards (8E.1) - downtown parking strategy (ongoing) (8E.4) - roadway design standards (connectivity, context, access mgt., etc.) (8F.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Complete plan and begin implementation of the strategic road investment plan</u> for under-served areas, tied to land use/environmental goals (8A.4) • <u>Modify internal GDOT policies, programs and priorities</u> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expand traffic demand management programs (8A.12) • <u>Incorporate geometric design standards</u> to promote flexibility, context-sensitive development and traffic calming (8A.6, 8A.13) • <u>Complete Plan and begin implementation of the Collector Street Plan</u> to promote enhanced connectivity (8A.8) • <u>Seek intergovernmental action for accelerated development of key highway improvements:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - northern portion of the urban loop (8A.9) - US 29/urban loop interchanges (8A.10) • <u>Adjust the City's Capital Improvement Program</u> with prioritized bicycle/pedestrian initiatives (8B.2) • <u>Begin the development of the Bicycle Plan</u> (8B.2) • <u>Adjust development standards</u> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote bicycling in new developments (8B.2) - incorporate bicycle/pedestrian improvements in roadway and transit plans (8B.3) - dedicate "missing links" in the trail system at the time of development. (8B.4, 5A.4) - encourage transit-supportive design features/use mixes at major activity centers (8C.3) - improve efficiency of parking (shared use, promotion of infill) (8E.2-3) - improve connectivity, context-sensitivity, access management, etc. in roadway design (8F.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Initiate and fund a strategic road investment plan</u> for under-served areas, tied to land use / environmental goals (8A.4) • <u>Implement Bicycle Plan</u> (8B.2) • <u>Continue implementation of walkability initiatives</u> (8B.2) • Continue implementation of the <u>Long-Range Transit Plan</u> (8C.1) • Subject to feasibility / funding, <u>create initiatives</u> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish secondary transit centers (8C.4) - establish an additional dedicated funding source for transit (8C.5) - reassess and continue implementation of the downtown parking strategy (8E.4)

Table 10-1. Action Plan – page 3

Element	Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(FY03/04)	(FY04/05 – 05/06)	(FY06/07 - 12/13)
TRANSPORTATION (Chapter 8.0) (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Adjust development standards to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote walkability in new developments (8B.2) • <u>Assess opportunities/needs to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhance existing bus service including shuttles, passenger amenities, etc. (8C.2) - develop park-and-ride and feeder/express bus services to support the regional system (8D.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Adopt Long-Range Transit Plan</u> and begin implementation (8C.1) • Begin <u>implementation of walkability initiatives</u> (8B.2) • <u>Assess opportunities/needs to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish secondary transit centers (8C.4) - establish an additional dedicated funding source for transit (8C.5) - prepare for future regional transit service (8D.1) • Subject to feasibility/funding, <u>create initiatives to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhance existing bus service (8C.2) - develop park-and-ride and feeder/express bus services for the regional system (8D.2) • <u>Implement downtown parking strategy</u> (8E.4) 	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE (Chapter 9.0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Investigate potential funding sources</u> for a phased capital program for the extension of water and sewer (capital recovery fee) (9A.3) • <u>Link annexation decisions to water/sewer extension policies</u> within defined criteria for annexation (contiguity, growth tier, infrastructure capacity, fiscal impact) (9A.5, 4F.3) • Continue development of a <u>plan for solid waste disposal</u> (9B.1) • <u>Expand programs, design standards and regulatory provisions</u> for stormwater runoff including stream corridor protection and floodplain management (9B.4-5, 5B.3-4) • <u>Evaluate resources needed to provide police and other public services</u> in newly annexed areas (9C.3) • <u>Initiate dialog with Guilford County Public Schools</u> to coordinate school siting with the City's growth policies and to identify opportunities for joint facilities (9C.4, 9D.2) • Consistent with the Strategic Five Year Plan of the Greensboro Police Department, <u>continue to implement an integrated approach to policing</u> focused on crime prevention (9F.1) • <u>Initiate cooperative dialog between Greensboro Police Department and</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - other City Departments, to identify opportunities to broaden the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts (9F.2) - residents, to address safety and crime prevention at the neighborhood level (9F.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Establish a phased capital program</u> to provide infrastructure in advance of development, consistent with the fringe area growth tiers (9A.2, 4F.5) • <u>Work with Guilford County</u> on the use of funds allocated to the County to support the phased capital program (9A.4) • Complete and begin implementation of a <u>plan for solid waste disposal</u> (9B.1) • <u>Enact a "community facility planning system"</u> based on objective level of service standards and apply in capital and operating budgeting (9C.1-2) • Develop a <u>long-term plan for the City's future public water and wastewater treatment needs</u>, within timeframes with minimum risk of exceeding planned capacities (9B.2-3) • <u>Adjust criteria for development and programming City and community facilities and services</u> to incorporate opportunities for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - joint/multiple use (9D.1) - remote (computer) links to City services (9D.3) - integration of community facilities into mixed use centers (9E.1) - non-traditional means of access to multiple City services (neighborhood resource centers) (9E.2) - meeting unique needs of diverse population groups (9E.3) • Consistent with the Strategic Five Year Plan of the Greensboro Police Department, <u>continue to implement an integrated approach to policing</u> focused on crime prevention (9F.1) • <u>Expand the effectiveness of the "safest city" initiative</u> by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - linking multiple comprehensive plan policies to safety (neighborhood planning initiative, economic opportunities) (9F.4) - increasing human, operational and capital resources of the Greensboro Police Department (9F.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete implementation of a <u>plan for solid waste disposal</u> (9B.1) • Consistent with the Strategic Five Year Plan of the Greensboro Police Department, <u>continue to implement an integrated approach to policing</u> focused on crime prevention (9F.1) • <u>Implement programming of City and community facilities and services</u> to incorporate opportunities for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - joint/multiple use (9D.1) - remote (computer) links to City services (9D.3) - integration of community facilities into mixed use centers (9E.1) - non-traditional means of access to multiple City services (neighborhood resource centers) (9E.2) - meeting unique needs of diverse population groups (9E.3)
ACHIEVING RECONCILIATION AND EQUITY (Introduction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Appoint a citizens committee to study racial inequities</u> and associated social problems in Greensboro and <u>identify strategies for their elimination</u> 		

NOTE: For the full text of the policies refer to the corresponding chapter and policy number as referenced in the parentheses () at the end of each policy in the Action Table.